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Berkshire

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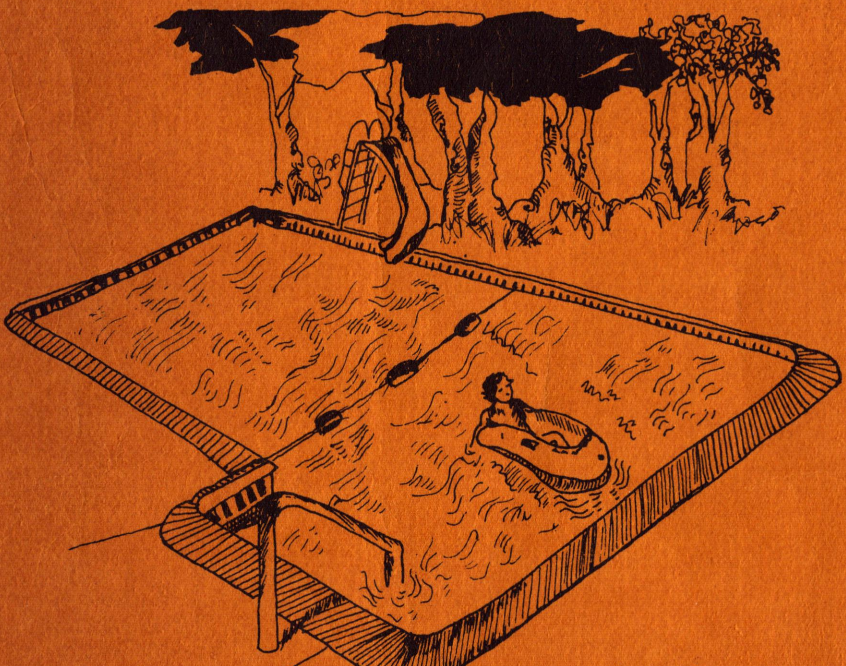

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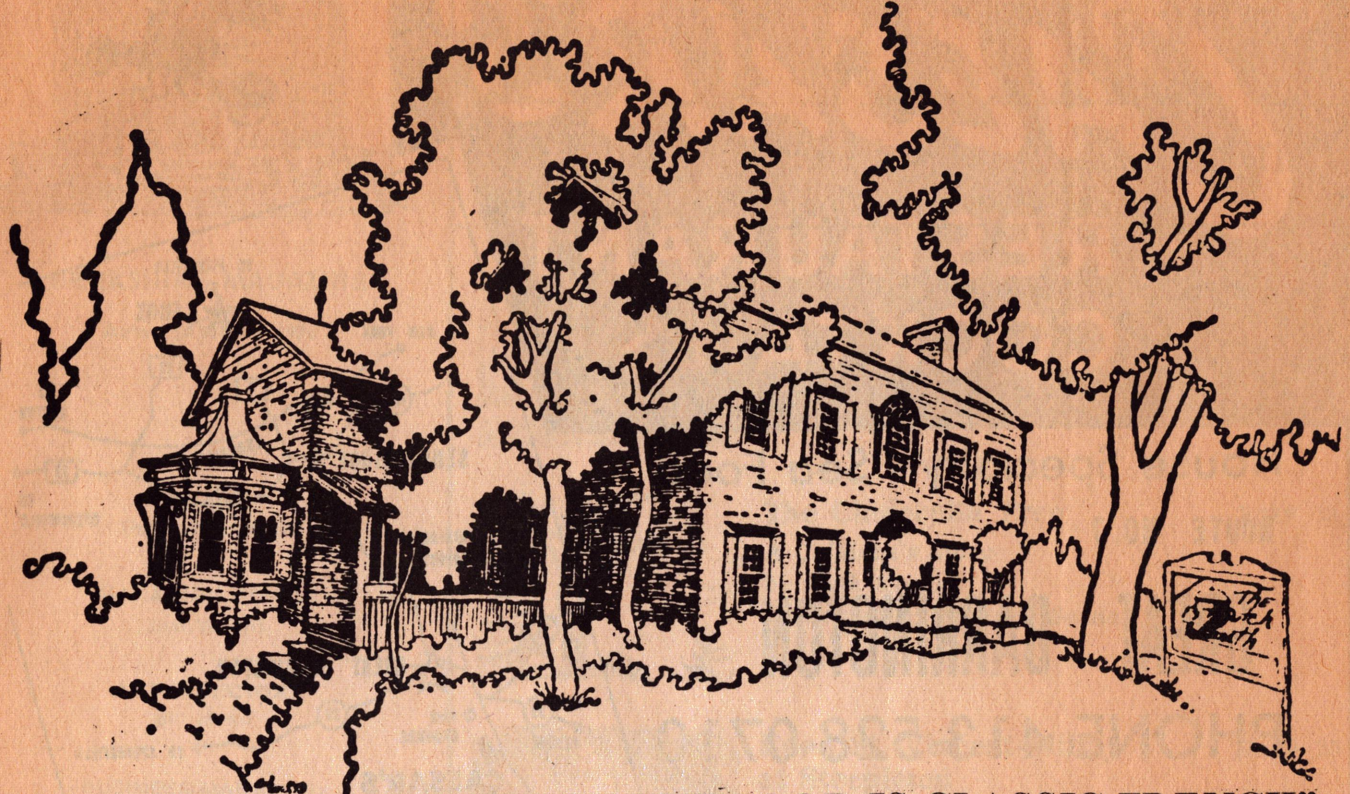

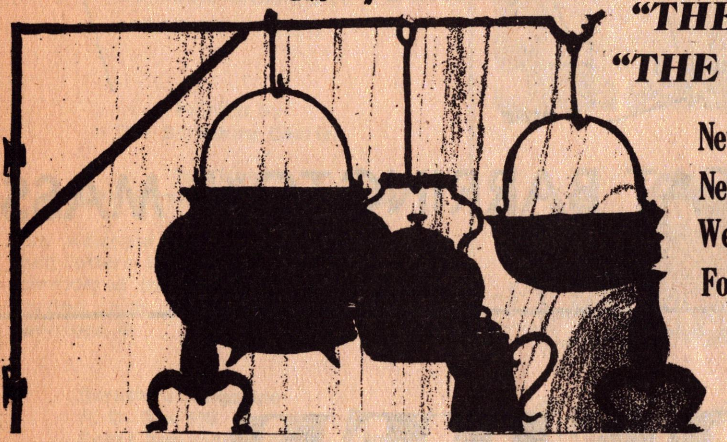

"THE FOOD IS CLASSIC FRENCH"
"THE SETTING IS 18TH CENTURY"

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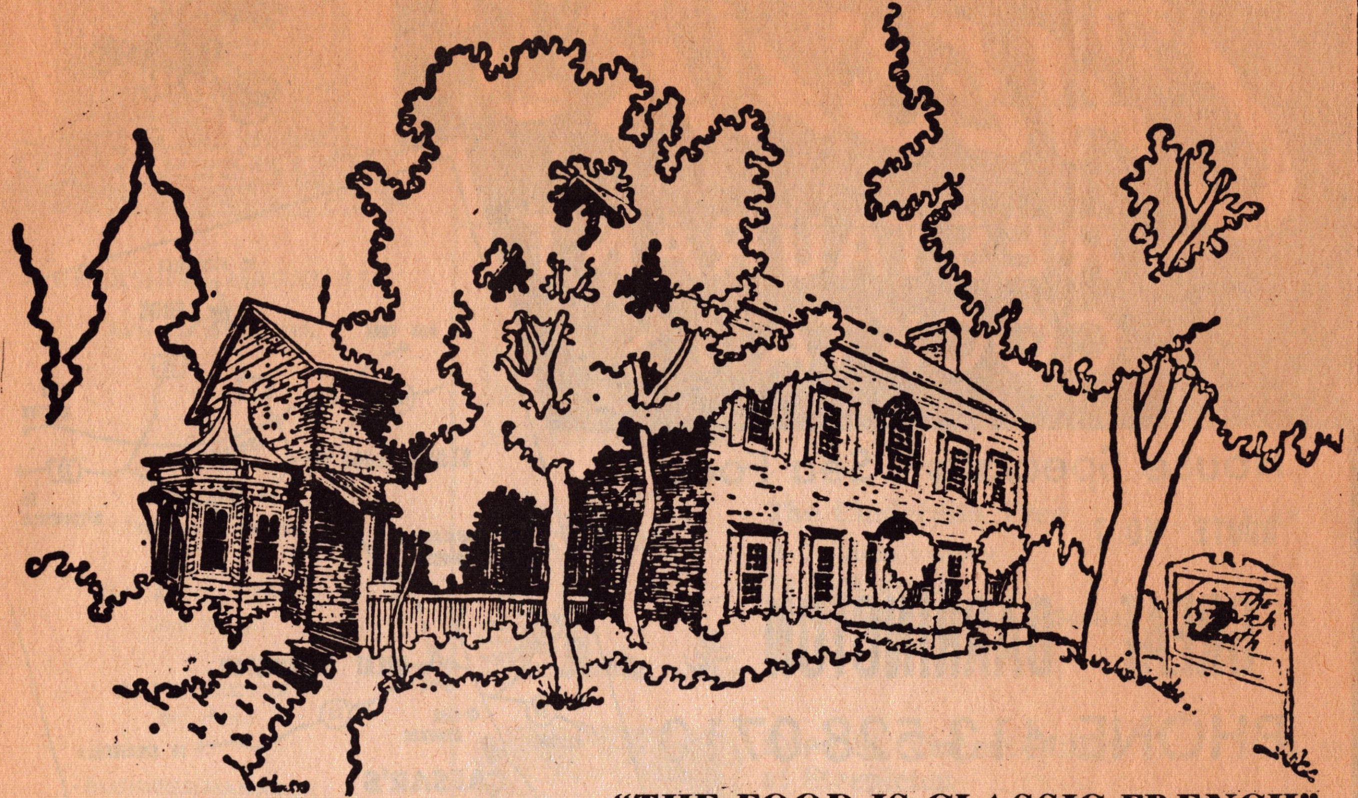

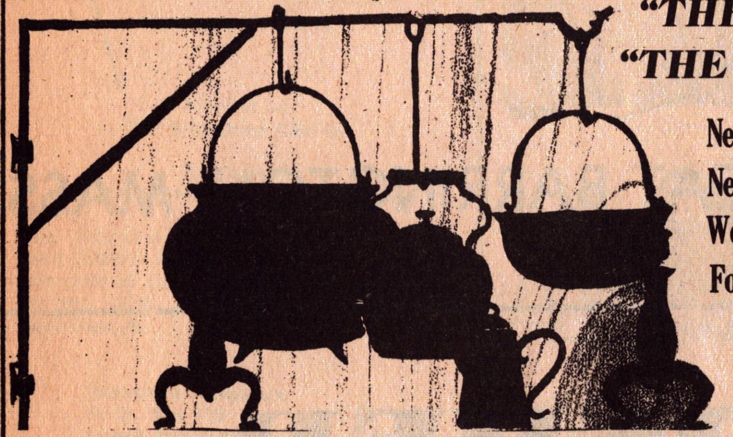

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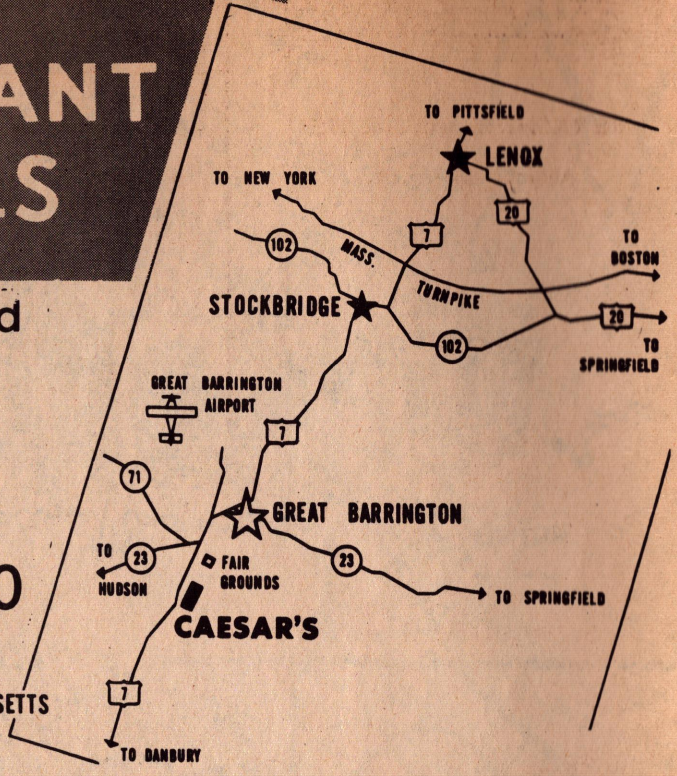
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BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE

Autumn/ Winter 1974

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Thomas Lashnits

MANAGING EDITOR:
Judi Wright

ART DIRECTOR:
Bill Howe

BUSINESS MANAGER:
Albert M. Schwartz

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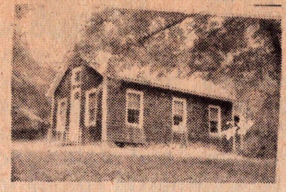
Berkshire
Magazine



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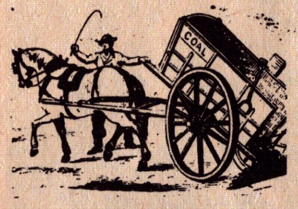

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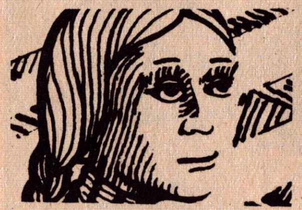

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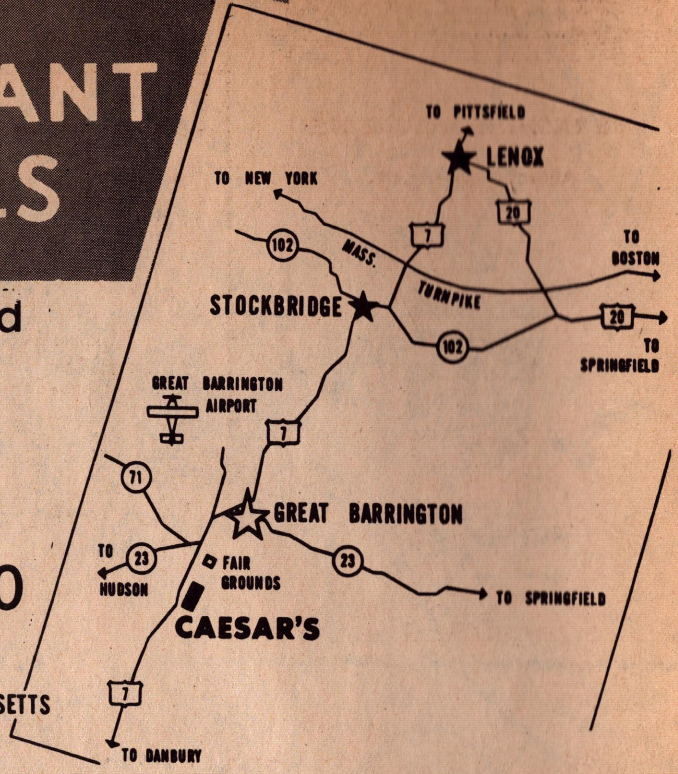
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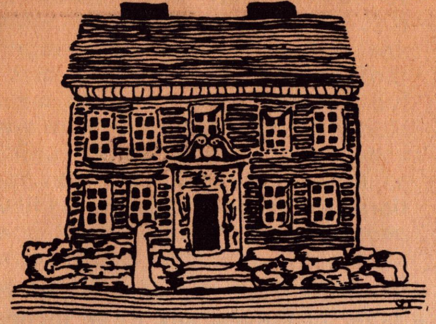

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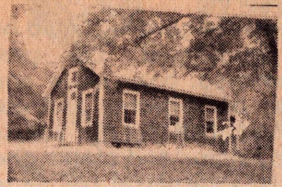

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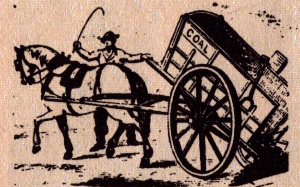

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from the editor. . .

Autumn greetings to our Berkshire friends. I'm happy to report that the summer issue of **Berkshire Magazine**, its first, was received with a good degree of enthusiasm from our readers - excerpts from a couple of their letters appear in a new department, Town Crier. In addition to some readers' comments, Town Crier will bring you news of important upcoming events and also some interesting tidbits of general information.

In addition, the autumn issue of **Berkshire Magazine** has articles on Edna St. Vincent Millay and her Austerlitz home Steepletop, on legends of the Berkshires, on the history of tiny Mount Washington and on the Berkshire energy situation this winter. There is also a charming children's story by Ruth Krauss, with illustrations by Maurice Sendak. You'll also see our three regular departments: Berkshire Bookshelf, Antiques & Auctions and Country Fare.

Country Fare, written by Sheffield native Floyd Woodbeck, gives some hints on how to prepare for winter - gathering nuts, getting those long neglected fruit trees into shape for next year, and of course, a couple of wine recipes.

In doing some research for autumn house and garden work, we ran across a little book published by Henry Ward Beecher in 1859 called **Plain and Pleasant Talk about Fruits, Flowers and Farming.** It's packed full of timeless hints; we pass along a few here. The Reverend Beecher was born in Litchfield, Connecticut and became a well-known preacher in Brooklyn, New York. He spent his summers in Salisbury until 1853 when he bought a farm in Lenox — not to work but to "lie down upon." So enthralled was he with Lenox and the Berkshires, that, it was reported, members of his congregation, fearing "that he would abandon his church and pass the remainder of his life in Lenox. . bestirred themselves, and at last prevailed upon him to accept a country home in Peekskill."

Fall Work in the Garden. "Planting seeds may be performed for very early spring use. Lettuce, spinage, and radishes, may be sewn in a sheltered spot, and they will come forward ten days or a fortnight earlier than those which have been sown in the spring.

"Clearing up the garden should be thoroughly performed. Let pea-brush be removed, bean poles and flower stakes be collected and put under shelter. Collect all refuse vines, haulm, stems and stalks and wheel them to a corner to rot, or to be ready for use in covering flower beds. Let the alleys be hoed out for the last time, and it will be as good as one hoeing in the spring, when they will probably be too wet to hoe. Gravel may now be laid in the walks; if ashes are to be spread, it may be done in autumn and save time in the spring.

"All tender plants are to be removed or secured by covering. The best covering to secure the earth from frost, that we know of, is a layer of leaves, say three inches thick when well packed down, and upon them two or three inches of chip dirt, with the coarsest part on top. We have had the soil unfrozen in severe winters when so covered. In this manner, tuberoses, gladiolus, dahlias, tiger flowers, etc., may be kept out through the winter. The gladiolus thus treated makes splendid tufts of blossoms. It may be prudent to try only a few at first, and adventure more as experience gives confidence.

H. W. Beecher

"If portions of the garden have been infested with cutworms, etc., let it be spaded and thrown up loosely just before freezing weather. A clay soil will be ameliorated by frosts, if treated in the same way. A light, loose soil should not be worked in the fall.

Getting Ready for Winter. Haul tanbark and bank up around the house to insure a warm cellar. Cellar windows should be kept open through the day, and closed after the nights begin to freeze, as late in the season as possible. See that dry walks are prepared from the house to all the out-houses. Do not be stingy of your materials; make the paths high and rounding, so as to insure dryness, especially about the barn. See that stones, gravel or timber are laid so as to be out of the way of cattle's feet, and just in the way of your own. We have seen swamp-barn-yards, before going into which a prudent man would choose to make his will. Mud on the shoes from roads and fields is all well enough; but mud from one's own yards, shows that the owner has not fixed up as he ought to have done.

"If your stables are old, examine the floor; or some night may let a horse through, to come out lame for life. If you have a dirt floor, see that it is carefully laid, and remember that if it be inclined either way, it should be from the rack and not toward it. Let your wagons, carts, plows, etc., be repaired during the fall and winter, and not be left till spring. See that your shingles are all sound on the house, barn, and shed. The leak which you have allowed to drop, drop, drop all summer has at last taken off a yard or two of plaster, and it is time now to put on a shingle or two. There is another leak or two that must be stopped. That pocket of yours which has let out dime after dime for liquor, the hole getting bigger and bigger every year, now is the time to sow it up, or it will rip you up. A pocket is a small place, to be sure, but we have seen barns, cattle, and acre after acre slip through a hole in it which, at first, was only large enough to let a sixpence through.

"If you have no stables for your cattle, you should have good sheds provided, opening to the south. Even when cattle are allowed to run through the stock-fields, there ought to be in some warm place an ample shed to which they can resort during wet and cold weather; and one sufficiently snug can be made without calling in the carpenter or buying lumber."

After doing all that work, settle back and enjoy the beautiful autumn season. To put you in the mood, here's an excerpt from another Beecher book, **Star Papers**. Written from Lenox in 1854, the chapter is called "Mid-October Days:"

"It is now mid-October. . . That scenery which a few weeks ago stood in summer green now seemed enchanted. The Housatonic was the same. The skies were the same. The mountain forms were unchanged. But they had blossomed into resplendent colors from top to base. It was strange to see such huge mountains, that are images of firmness and majesty, now tricked out with fairy pomp, as if all the spirits of the air had reveled there, and hung their glowing scarfs on every leaf and bough. . .

"The air is very clear, very still, and very solemn, or, rather, tenderly sad, in its serene brightness. It is not that moist spring air, full of the smell of wood, of the soil, and of the odor of vegetation, which warm winds bring to us from the south. It is not that summer atmosphere, full of alterations of haze and fervent clearness, as if Nature were brewing every day some influence for its myriad children; sometimes in showers and sometimes with coercive heat upon roof and leaf; and, like a universal taskmaker, was driving up the hours to accomplish the labors of the year. No! In these autumn days there is a sense of leisure and of meditation. The sun seems to look down upon the labors of its fiery hands with complacency. Be satisfied, O seasonable Sun! Thou hast shaped an ample year, and art garnering up harvests which well may swell thy rejoicing heart with gracious gladness. ." ❦

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Stockbridge 1739 - 1974

* * *

Looking for My Name

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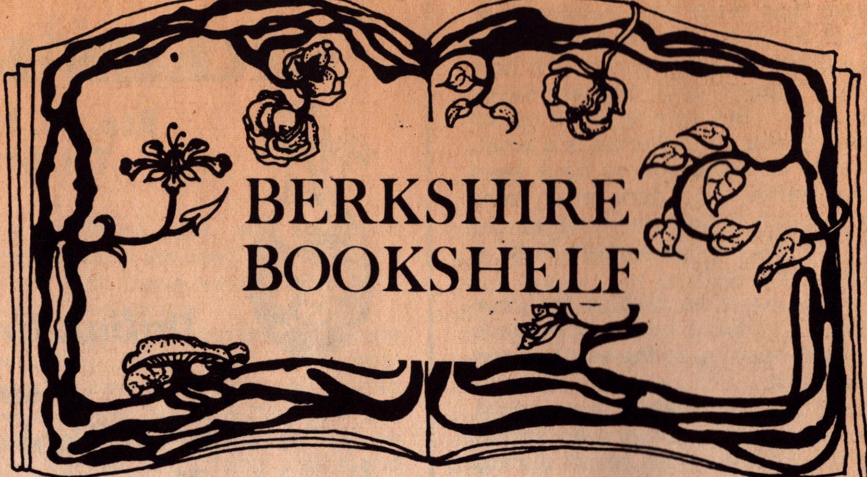
The Indian and White Man in Massachusetts & Rhode Island

* * *

by
Henry Nadig



BERKSHIRE BOOKSHELF

Stockbridge 1739 - 1974
By Sarah Cabot Sedgwick and Christina Sedgwick Marquand
The Berkshire Traveller Press
Stockbridge, Mass., 1974
364 Pages. Paperback $5.95

Far from being merely a history of the town, **Stockbridge 1739-1974** is a delightful romp through the American snows of yesteryear. (And there are some spring freshets, too). Although this extremely well-written chronicle is primarily a history of the town itself, it is much more than that. It is a potpourri of social history, political history, and a history of our nation's changing ideas and mores.

Whether we are confronted with the encroachment of the automobile on "small town U.S.A." or the invasion by the new generation of tourists in the '60's and early '70's, we are continually made to see our Stockbridge in the larger context of American history as a whole. And, as we are led on this journey from the past to the present, it is a sheer delight to read such a fine, sophisticated prose style — a style reminiscent of some of the best late 19th century and turn-of-the-century writing, a style that is direct and clear, but also one that has detachment and humour.

Sarah Cabot Sedgwick and Christina Sedgwick Marquand originally wrote this history for publication in 1939. It had gone through two printings and was joining the list of hard-to-find local Americana until the Berkshire Traveller Press recently published the present, up-dated version. In the new edition, Sarah Cabot Sedgwick has added three new chapters that cover the years from 1939 to 1974. In these chapters, which deal among other things, with Tanglewood, The Music Inn, Wheatleigh, The Berkshire Playhouse, and the Austen Riggs Center, both the Berkshire newcomer and the native will find many familiar names — both famous and not-so-famous.

I particularly enjoyed the last chapter, "The Great American Love Affair with Stockbridge," where Mrs. Sedgwick presents her analysis of the recent popularity of two such divergent local celebrities as Norman Rockwell and Alice Brock. Here, as in other sections of this history, we are not merely exposed to local figures in a local context; we see them painted for us on a larger, national canvas. Throughout the book, what happens in Stockbridge, whether of national significance or not, is presented as symptomatic of the times.

The most distinguishing feature of the book, I think, is the way the authors make the people of the past come to life on the page. From the beginning, when they present a truly sympathetic and understanding picture of the Stockbridge Indians and their problems with the white man, right on down to recent local citizens and their efforts to keep Stockbridge from being ravaged by commercialism and eutrophication of lake and town, the authors make us feel that we are somehow directly involved. Not being a native to Stockbridge (I live as an outlander just over the line in Lenox) I particularly liked the way the book deals directly and indirectly with problems and events that have been common to all Berkshire County towns. While Stockbridge is an extraordinary town in many ways, it nonetheless emerges in this history as a kind of symbol for all of Berkshire County.

There is something for everybody in this book. Those who find themselves only mildly interested in the theological implications of Jonathan Edwards' work or the historical details of Shays' Rebellion, will undoubtedly become engrossed in other aspects of the book — maybe the histories of the "great cottages" or the intriguing portraits of some of the town's early 20th century celebrities.

Although this new edition of the book is not meant to act as a tourist's guide to Stockbridge, there is an excellent map at the beginning which allows the uninitiated to locate the many places referred to in the text. The cover illustration by Sheila Granda, who teaches art at Berkshire Community College, does a fine job of capturing the nature of the town with a touch of nostalgia. The sixteen photographs are well-chosen and further add to the appeal of the book.

For part-time or full-time resident, for native or newcomer, this book is definitely required reading. It gives us a full-fledged picture of the past, a thumbnail sketch of the present, and makes us raise the right questions about where we should be going in the future.

Looking for My Name
By Ron Atkinson
The Bookstore Press
Lenox, Mass. 1974
Paperback. $2.95

"Who touches this, touches a man." These words, used by Walt Whitman in referring to his book of poems **Leaves of Grass,** might just as easily be used to describe Atkinson's **Looking for My Name.** There is real genius in much of Atkinson's poetry: not only a genius of poetic facility with words, but a genius with the human and the humane.

Ron Atkinson, who lives in Pittsfield and teaches at Berkshire Community College, has been poet-in-residence for the Massachusetts Council for the Arts and Humanities in the Springfield and Pittsfield public schools. With the publication of **Looking for My Name,** his first book of poems, he should now achieve the national recognition he deserves.

Since I am a rather persnickety, perfectionistic, and impatient critic of most of what passes for poetry these days, I pick up any new book of poems with a considerable degree of skepticism. Some of us get rather tired of the sentimentality and undisciplined emotional dribble that seems to come our way more frequently than ever before. You can imagine, then, my delight and surprise on my first picking up Atkinson. As Emerson said of Montaigne's writing, "Cut these words and they would bleed."

Never before have I found in a contemporary poet such deeply felt pathos and tragedy so completely free of sentimentality. The poet and his feelings come to life on the page. And, in many of Atkinson's best poems it becomes impossible to separate what is said from the way it is said. Prose paraphrase is out of the question. In other words, his work often achieves the level of great literature — where form and content become one and the same thing. Whether he is dealing with the death of his young daughter, his own awakening to love, or his groping for a universal identity, Atkinson always speaks from the depths of his whole being. But, while his poems have the kind of depth that yields more and more on each reading, they are by no means esoteric or unintelligible. Nor are they delightful lyrical romps that one reads merely for entertainment. The poems are meant to be savoured, to be read over and over again.

Although there is no way I can do justice to the dimensions of Atkinson's work in this review, I can at least hope to whet your appetite enough so that you make a point of going out of your way to pick up the book. If my unqualified praise has not convinced you yet, perhaps a few isolated lines from some of the poems will do the job. In a remarkably powerful poem, "Fiercely How the Daughters of New Babylon," Atkinson speaks of daughters who "separate from their senses/ and go off to marry the world and its middlemen," concluding with these lines:

See them, our daughters
see how they wrap their hurts in a thimble
put the thimble in a glove
hook their bodies to antennae
and rotate wildly over the face of this strange land.

Or, at the other end of the spectrum there is the sheer simplicity and depth of the following:

He looks into the lake.
There is more than one of him today.
They pass each other every day
in schoolhouse factory halls,
along clipped green riverbanks
smiling, always smiling, an amphibian smile,
nodding quietly to each
other
never touching.

It is not often one meets up with a man of such depth and wisdom who is at the same time a master of the poet's craft. I hope you enjoy meeting him as much as I have.

A 19th century view of Main Street in Stockbridge, from Stockbridge 1739 - 1974.

Henry Nadig, Jr., lives in Lenox and is Chairman of the English Department at The Albany Academy. His articles have appeared in the **English Journal, The Humanities Journal,** and **The Independent School Bulletin.**

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The Indian and White Man in Massachusetts & Rhode Island
By Chandler Whipple
The Berkshire Traveller Press
Stockbridge, Mass. 1974
156 pages. Paperback. $3.50

Having just read a good book on an historical subject, the reader should be thirsting for more. Otherwise, the book has not succeeded. Chandler Whipple's new book, **The Indian and the White Man in Massachusetts & Rhode Island,** which I just put down a few moments ago, has left me with a thirst to know more about the Indians in Massachusetts, particularly in the Berkshires.

I picked up the book hoping that a substantial part of it would deal with the Berkshires but was somewhat disappointed that such a small portion actually focuses on the Stockbridge Indians. This may be an unfair reaction, for it is clear at the outset that Whipple's purpose is to give a comprehensive survey of the encounters of Indians and white men throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island. And, naturally, an attempt to touch on everything in such a large subject invariably forces the writer to cover most aspects somewhat superficially. The book, is , therefore, not for the scholar who wishes to dig deeply into the subject; it is rather a book for the general reader who wishes more of an introduction.

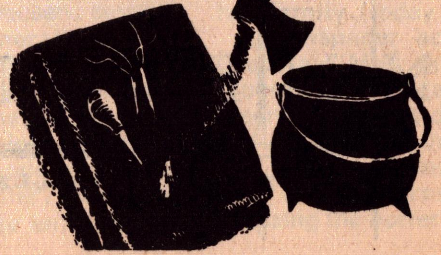
Illustrations by Janice T. Lindstrom

My only bone of contention with the book is that, although it succeeded in stimulating my thirst throughout its 156 pages, there were very few points along the road where I was led to a clear, cool roadside spring. To put it another way, there are very few spots in the book where Whipple treats his subject with enough depth and enough feeling for the drama of history so that the reader's thirst is at least temporarily quenched, leaving him refreshed enough to go on for more.

Whipple has succeeded remarkably, however, in confronting head-on some of the long-cherished beliefs about the early colonists and the Indians. Who ever heard of the "saintly" Pilgrims robbing Indian graves for trinkets? The fairness, objectivity, and circumspection with which he approaches the treachery and cruelty of both Indian and white man leave us with the whole truth rather than a simplistic or biased statement of the facts. Whipple is particularly cautious, while clearly deploring the white man's wresting of land from the Indian, to refrain from value judgments that would stand in the way of the facts speaking for themselves. He is particularly good when dealing with some of the common misconceptions about King Philip's War and when he is dealing with some of the little-known facts about the early Pilgrims. His chapter "The Saints Come Sailing In" is rightly not without some bias. And many an early settler besides Miles Standish fares rather poorly under Whipple's pursuit of the truth.

Closer to home, I particularly enjoyed my first introduction to the Stockbridge Indians, not having been aware of many of the intriguing facts and the role of the Indians in our local history. Most astonishing is the fact that during over sixty years of the white man and the Indian living side by side in the Berkshires there is only one recorded incident of violence between them. Nor did I know that an entire company of Stockbridge Indians fought in the Revolutionary War.

Whipple, who lives in Great Barrington, is understandably most interesting to read when he deals with the Berkshires. Throughout this new book, which is the second in the First Encounter Series, we are given a full exposure to an aspect of our New England heritage that has all-too-often been neglected or distorted by previous historians.



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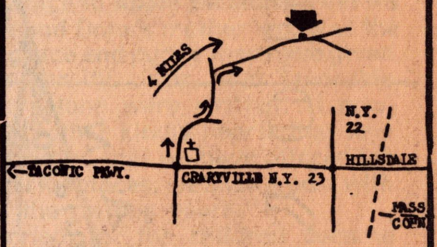

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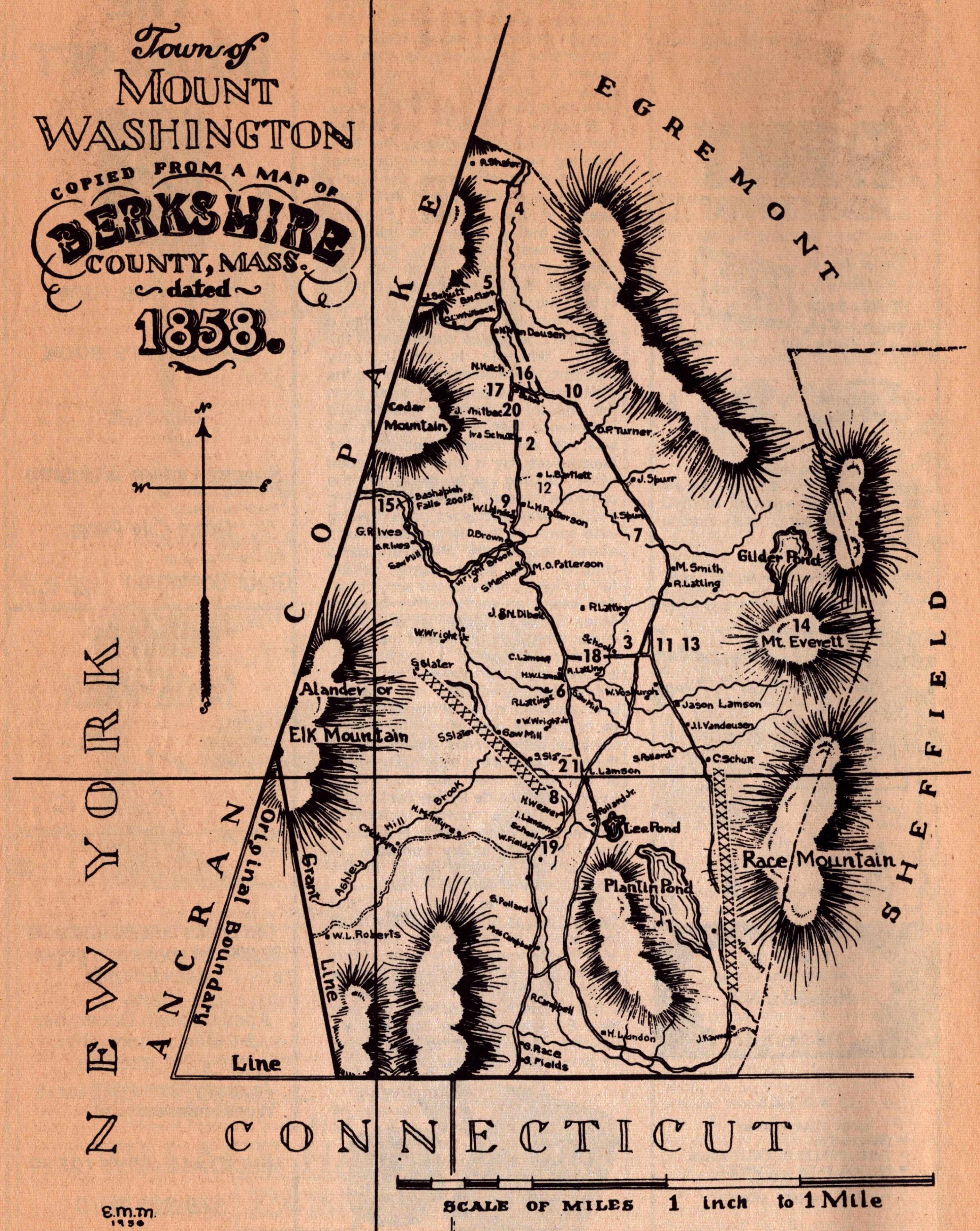


Dora Goodale

Mount Washington
Town Among The Clouds

Elaine Goodale

by
Judi Wright

"I had a large parlor, with a stove in it and a bed-room connecting. From my window the grandest and loveliest scenery was always inviting the eye. Within a few minutes' walk over a notch in Ashley Hill, I could be in the great lonely wilderness, stretching away west and north to Alandar, and which at all times of day, but especially in the afternoon, was fairly palpitating with vivid color."

So wrote a correspondent of the New York Evening Post after spending an autumn holiday at one of Berkshire County's most popular resort areas one hundred years ago. That era is gone now, but the autumn scenes are still the most beautiful to be found. The place is Mount Washington, "the town among the clouds."

Mount Washington, Massachusetts, hasn't changed very much in the past 100 years. There are no tourist attractions, no quaint restorations of old shops; in fact there are no shops at all. Weekend people have built their modern houses, but most of them are back in the woods with long driveways, invisible to the eye of the passerby. For those unaware of its existence, Mount Washington can be quite a surprise. Driving over the mountain from Salisbury to Egremont on what the maps call "unimproved road," reveling in the splendor of the autumn foliage, one comes upon the little church and town hall. They're unexpected enough to prompt an incredulous, "There's a town up here?" There is. It's an old town, and a proud and busy one. And yet, through the years, it's been growing even smaller and smaller.

Today, Mount Washington is the smallest town in the state of Massachusetts. It wasn't always that way. Though the population is swelled considerably by weekend residents and young visitors to its Camp Hi-Rock (1) and Northrup Camp, (2) the permanent population of Mount Washington has been declining steadily since it was a thriving town of 474 in 1810.

Inhabitants numbered 350 in 1860, 205 in 1880, and since 1930 the mountain has had fewer than 70 year-round residents at each census. The count in 1970 was 59; the town list of registered voters at the end of 1973 numbered 51.

Browsing through the Cross Road Cemetery (3) or glancing at an old map will yield many of the same names as are still found on the mailboxes around town. Garrett, Weaver, Spurr, Whitbeck, Van Deusen; several families have been on the mountain for generations.

For the most part, the roads on Mount Washington are pretty much the same today as when they were laid out in the late 1700's. (I hasten to add that they're in much better condition today!) Some have fallen into disuse and have been abandoned (xxx), and at least one was closed by a slide during a flood in 1955. In the winter, the road to Salisbury is closed below Alandar. While enjoying the autumn foilage, the visitor can find a lot of history in this tiny town simply by driving over these old roads and looking out the window.

The Sky Farm Poets

The sign reads Mt. Washington Rd., off Rt. 41. Crossing Jug End Road, follow Goodale Brook (4) up the mountain. The brook was named for Chester Goodale, a prominent resident of South Egremont and owner of the Goodale quarries. He erected nine buildings in South Egremont in addition to grist mills and saw mills. He was also a town officer and represented Egremont at the legislature in Boston. The home of one of Goodale's eight children, Henry Sterling Goodale, stood at the top of the hill, just before the fork that leads, on the right, to Bash Bish. The place was known as Sky Farm (5).

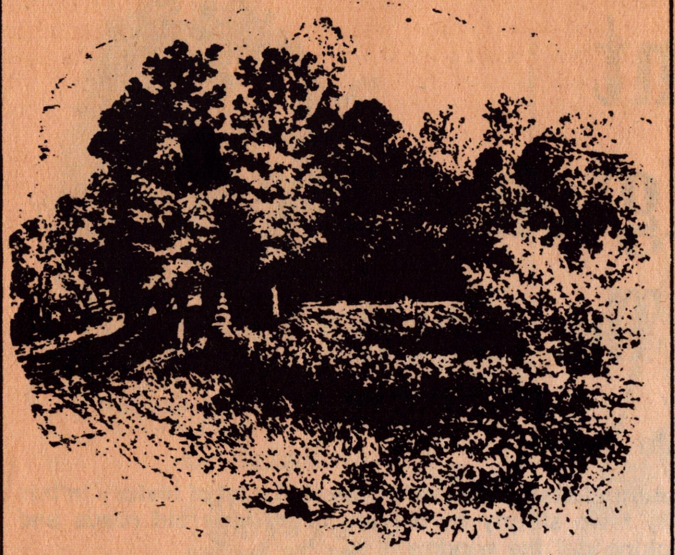
Two of the most well-known residents of Mt. Washington lived here. They were Chester Goodale's grandchildren, Elaine and Dora Goodale, known as "the apple blossom poets." Born at Sky Farm in 1863 and 1866, the girls began writing poetry when they were each nine years old. Their first volume of poetry was published by Putnam's in New York when they were fifteen and twelve, in 1778. In the preface to **Apple Blossoms: Verses of Two Children,** Elaine and Dora's mother wrote of the poems: "By their grace and purity they have given perennial delight to the family circle, that favorable audience for which they alone were written. If now, willing to share them with other kindly hearts that love true and simple things, we find that we have offered too slight a bouquet in the marketplaces, we shall await with patience the fruitage of the coming years."

She needn't have worried, for the children became immediate favorites, and the following year another volume, **In Berkshire With The Wild Flowers,** was published. The original editions of both are available in the Lenox library. For the next several years, poetry by the sisters and their mother was published in Harpers, Good Housekeeping and other periodicals, and widely read and admired, according to many local writers of the day.

Elaine and Dora's farmer father, Henry Goodale, was also a poet. Their mother, Dora Read Goodale, came from Reading, Conn, the town having been named after her family (today Redding, Conn.).

A newspaper account of the day described Elaine Goodale. "Miss Goodale is about the medium, neither brunette nor blonde, of a graceful figure and entertaining manner. She has dark eyes and chestnut hair, regular features, with an intelligent and expressive countenance that lights up wonderfully as she talks."

At a Sky Farm picnic in September, 1879, while "passing the butter and handing the sandwiches," Elaine



SKY FARM Cottage, home of the Apple Blossom Poets, Elaine and Dora Goodale, from the 1860's to the 1880's.

PAPA'S BIRTHDAY
By Elaine Goodale

O dear Sky Farm! O rare Sky Farm!
Rejoice, to-day, rejoice!
Unite your many tongues to ours
In one harmonious voice;
Ye winsome warblers of the wood,
Pour forth your clarion lays,
And welcome to the happy earth
This happiest of days!

For 'tis the anniversary
Of his auspicious birth,
Who singled out from all the world
This cherished spot of earth;
Who brought a loved and loving wife
To grace its haunts so wild,
And, with its blessing, thrice became
The father of a child.

It is his birthday who has tilled
Its acres broad and fair,
Has reaped its golden harvest fields,
And breathed its balmy air;
Whose holy, happy home it is,
With mother, children, wife,
Whose vine-clad cottage crowns the hill,
Brimful of health and life.

O dear Sky Farm! O rare Sky Farm!
Break out in brighter bloom,
And waft o'er all the emerald fields
Your incense of perfume!
Deep heavens of celestial blue,
Watcho'er him, guard and bless
Thro' many a sun-lit birthday more
Of love and happiness!

May warmer union bind our hearts
Together from this hour
And draw us closer to our farm
With deep and sacred power!
Grant every highest, purest joy,
Protect from every harm,
The planter of our precious home,
The founder of Sky Farm!

Goodale conversed with a Mount Washington visitor, General Armstrong, who was superintendent of the Indian Schools at Hampton, Va., and General Armstrong interested Elaine in the plight of the Indians. The Goodales left the mountain before the mid-1880's, but in June, 1891, Elaine returned to Sky Farm - on her honeymoon.

Her husband was Dr. Charles Eastman, a Sioux, and the Government Medical Inspector at Pine Ridge Agency in South Dakota. Elaine had become Supervisor of Indian schools there, and had spent much time traveling to inspect the fifty or more schools scattered throughout the Indian country. The couple spent their wedding night at Sky Farm in the room in which Elaine was born.

The next day the newlyweds visited Bash Bish, and Eastman spoke in glowing terms of his wife's home town. "The air smells sweet," he remarked, according to the newspaper account. Eastman later wrote the books **Indian Heroes And Great Chieftains** and **Indian Boyhood,** recently reissued by Dover Press and described as "recommended on numerous library lists as one of the best books to relate the facts and the flavor of American Indian life."

Sky Farm passed through a succession of owners, and the property was finally purchased by the State of Massachusetts in 1954. The "vine-clad cottage" perished some time ago - a 1937 guide describes the site as "marked by large maples and a heap of stones, now almost obliterated by forest growth." Not yet obliterated, the celler hole is but a few feet off the road into the woods; the large maples still mark the spot. (Any outside the car exploring on Mount Washington state property should be preceeded by a visit to the park station (21) a few miles up the road — the rangers like to keep woods-bound folks accounted for. Scavanging at celler holes is forbidden, and please respect the privacy of Mount Washington residents — no tresspassing on private property!)

The City

In a section of Mount Washington formerly called "The City," (6) there stood several homes, a grist mill, a blacksmith shop, a boot shop, and a cemetery (still existing, but on private property). Today you can drive over the fourth "City Bridge," and past a few houses. Nothing else remains of The City as a center of industry.

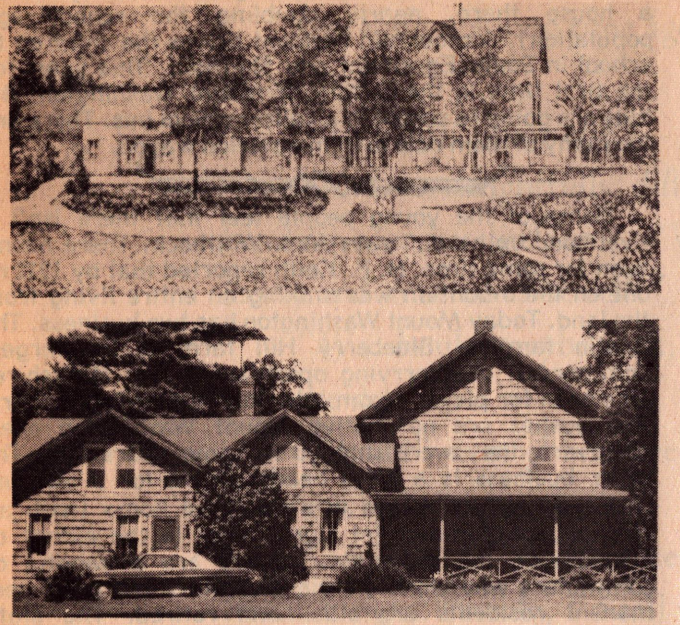
Between the years 1830 and 1850, The City manufactured bar iron, axes, shovels, forks, hoes and cartridges, but then manufacturing ceased on the mountain. The rangers of the Mt. Everett reservation and Mount Washington residents have found, deep in the woods on what is now state property, evidences of the huge old pits where wood was burned for charcoal for the iron mines. Until 1850, the charcoal supplied the iron smelters at Mt. Riga in Salisbury, an "axel factory" in Egremont, and the furnace at Copake Iron Works (now Copake Falls). After 1860, potato raising was popular, but that, too, declined. (It was revived in the 1930's.) It was then that the town turned to summer boarders for revenue.

The Boarding Houses

The Mount Washington section of an 1885 Gazetteer notes, "The capacity of its well kept summer boarding houses prove insufficient to accomodate even half of those who apply, while many who have spent several successive seasons here have commenced to build cottages for themselves, so that the present time appears to be the beginning of a fresh impetus in the growth of the town, bidding fair to become a popular summer resort." And that it did, for many years.

One of the first boarding houses was Isaac Spurr's "Pennyroyal Arms," (7) which first took in boarders about 1861. You can drive by "Pennyroyal Arms" today. Though no longer a boarding house, the rambling home is still occupied, unchanged, and the name of one of the mountain's oldest families, Spurr, is still on the mailbox. It was to "Pennyroyal Arms" that another resident of Mt. Washington came as a youngster. Vicky Whitbeck who has lived on the mountain forty years, recalls the summers spent at "Dr. Spurr's." "It was a very, very lovely life. We would come from Tarrytown on the train. . they used to have very comfortable Pullman cars. We were met at the station in Copake Falls and brought up the mountain. In those days, when you came to the mountain, you stayed there all summer. You never went off the mountain except for a special occasion."

Mrs. Whitbeck lives at "Alandar, (8)" which was probably the most popular boarding house on the mountain before the turn of the century, and certainly one of the largest; twenty-eight rooms have been removed. It was at "Alandar" that Mrs. Whitbeck found the old Berkshire County map that was reproduced to feature the Mount Washington section, and which accompanies this article. (Her original plan to have the entire original map put on a backing of linen was foiled: "the mice had chewed through South Egremont.")



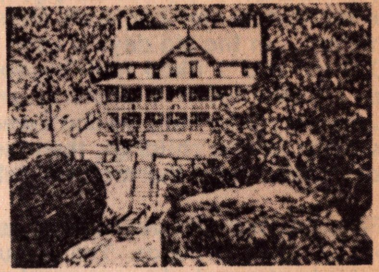
The Alandar, 1887 and 1974. Formerly one of Mount Washington's leading boarding houses, it is today a private home. Twenty-eight rooms have been removed.

One writer said of Alandar in 1885, "It has accomodations for 50 guests and is a deservedly popular resort for those seeking rest, health and pleasure among the mountains of old Berkshire." H. F. Keith wrote that description in **History of Berkshire County,** and it was high praise, for he, too, was to run a summer boarding house, "Taconic Farm," (9) near the hairpin turn going to Bash Bish. Keith was a civil engineer who came to Mount Washington with the idea of planning out a route for a railroad between Poughkeepsie and Springfield. The idea was abandoned, but Keith stayed on and became fascinated with the mountain and its history. It was his research that focused attention on a report made to the General Court of Massachusetts in 1752, naming the settlers then living west of Sheffield and the length of time any one person had cultivated his acreage.

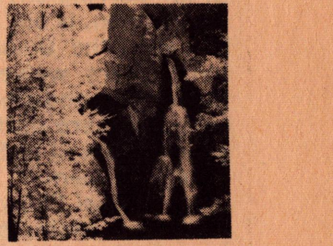
With six families indicated as living there at the time, the land of one John Hallanbeck was listed as having been cultivated for 60 years, placing at least one settler there in 1692. Keith felt, therefore, that Mount Washington was the oldest town in Berkshire County.

Whether or not this is true, the identity of that earliest settler must remain a matter of speculation, since few records exist from the time before the town was incorporated in 1779. Keith's "Taconic Farm" still stands. It changed hands during the summer and is now undergoing restoration.

Another boarding house that still exists as a private home is Ira Patterson's "Cottage Farm," (10) now the Wright's "Top Of The Berkshires", on East St. At one time, both Cottage Farm and Alandar housed post offices for their respective parts of town. In Mrs. Whitbeck's kitchen is the old post office desk from the Patterson house - a desk rumored to have been used by William Cullen Bryant when he was an attorney and town clerk in Great Barrington. The community has been without its own post office since the nineteen-twenties. Today the mail comes up from Copake Falls, N.Y., as it did in the old days.



The former Hotel



Bash Bish

Mt. Everett and Bash Bish

"The Dome of the Taconics," as Mt. Everett (14) was widely known in the past, is one of the best places in the county to view the autumn foliage. The peak was christened Mount Everett by Dr. Edward Hitchcock, state geologist in 1839, in honor of Governor Edward Everett. It was not a popular name.

"Oh call it not Mt. Everett!
Forever 'tis the Dome
Of the great Temple God has reared
In this, our Berkshire home"

Catharine Sedgwick protested on one of her first visits to the area. But the name Mt. Everett somehow triumphed.

Many a nature lover has extolled the virtues of the scenery from the top of the mountain (you can drive most of the way up, and walk the last few hundred feet to the top of the 2,624 ft. peak). For the physically fit, there's a trail about a half mile in length from the parking lot on the first level, just above Guilder Pond. Mt. Everett is part of a 1,000 acre reservation where the laurel, in June, is exquisite. A Rev. Headley wrote of Mt. Everett in the late 1800's: "You seem to look on the outer wall of creation, and this old dome seems to be the spot on which nature set her great compasses when she drew the circle of the heavens. A more beautiful horizon I have never seen then sweeps around you from this spot. The charm of the view is perfect on every side - a panorama, which becomes a moving one, if you will but take the trouble to turn round."

On the west side of Mount Washington is Bash Bish, (15) the beautiful 200-ft. waterfall that has attracted visitors since before the first white settlers. "Though the visitor may have gazed upon the wonders of Alpine scenery and the sublime revelations of the Valley of the Yosemite, and listened to the awful thunder of Niagara, it is now not without a silencing thrill of delight that the cataract of Bash Bish greets the vision," enthused a traveler before the turn of the century. There is a very steep path about a half mile long from a parking area on the Copake Falls road, which approaches Bash Bish from above. A longer but less strenuous path leads up the mountain to the falls from Taconic State Park on the New York Side. A hotel once stood near the falls; a foundation remains. Bash Bish is the setting of an Indian legend, that is recounted elsewhere in this issue (*Page 40*).

The Van der Smisson Memorial Pool and Park (16) at the north end of town, is for residents only.

Church and Town Hall

What is today the center of town contains the church and town hall (which one historian, forty years ago, described as resembling "a woodshed"). It was built in 1876 after a former town hall had decayed. The little Church of Christ of Mount Washington (11) was organized in 1874. The first church, erected on the Cross Road in 1806, burned down.

Mrs. Whitbeck describes the church today: "The church is open only ten weeks in the summer, from the last Sunday in June until the first Sunday in September. John Hay, a teacher at Simon's Rock (in Great Barrington) who has a summer home on Mount Washington, is our minister. . . In the old days it used to be called the Union Church, and I liked that because some years we've had Presbyterian ministers, and Methodists, and others. It's very informal, we don't wear hats, and there's little sermon for the children; then they go to town hall to Sunday School and the mothers take charge of them."

The annual Church Fair, the biggest event of the year on the mountain, is held on these grounds. The August fair this year drew hundreds of people from on and off mountain and raised about $3,000 from the sale of baked goods, antiques, crafts food and games. Square dancing and church dinners are other summer activities.

The "Union Church" has always been ecumenical, but one religious sect visited Mount Washington looking for converts in 1781. Mother Ann Lee, leader of the Shaker movement was said to have stopped at Mount Washington on the first leg of a mission journey through New England. Ann Lee House (12) now belongs to the state. It cannot be seen from the road (West St.)

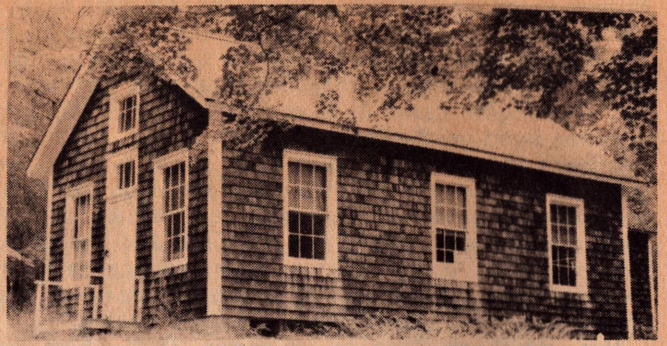
Town meetings are held in Town Hall (13). Mount Washington plans to use its more than $2,000 revenue sharing funds towards the installation of flush toilets in the building — the town has already installed a kitchen. In addition to three selectmen, town officers include a wire inspector, dog officer, fire warden, road commissioners, part-time police constable, moderator, assessors, tax collector and auditor.

The School Houses

In 1809, and for some time thereafter, there were three school houses on the mountain: North School, (17) Round Top School (18) formerly on the Cross Road near the cemetery; now gone) and South School, (19) which is now a private home just below Alandar on the Salisbury Road. The North School is now used as a library, open in the summer from 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. The building itself was moved from the middle of the fork near which it now stands, sometime after 1858, the date on the old map which locates it at the fork.

Just below the North School House, on the same side of the road, is one of the only watering tubs (20) left on the mountain roads. It is made of cast iron and fed by a stream.

With the steady decline in population, the North School house found itself with just one pupil in the 1940's. The student was Jim Whitbeck (Mrs. Whitbeck's son), who is now Superintendent of the Mount Everett Reservation and a Mount Washington selectman. The school was closed, Whitbeck was sent to Roeliff Jansen school in Hillsdale, and another item was added to the Mount Washington list of no store, no post office, finally, no school.



The North School House, now used as a library.

Today there are 12 or 13 school-age children on the mountain (a family with five youngsters recently rented a house there, nearly doubling the school age population). A mountain resident drives the children to school in South Egremont and Sheffield. This year, for the first time in the history of Mount Washington, the kids are going to school in a yellow school bus. There are too many of them now to fit in a station wagon.

* * *

"Some of the young people feel that there isn't a livelihood up here.," says Mrs. Whitbeck. There hasn't been for some time. H. F. Keith reported that by 1912 no one on the mountain was making an entire living from the land. Today Mount Washington has two business. The Austin family's Blueberry Hill farm is the largest commercial blueberrying operation in the Berkshires (it's open for picking from late July to mid-September). The bushes are not native Mount Washington ones, however - they were shipped in some years ago. The other business is a sales headquarters for a vacuum cleaning product, based in a beautiful home (with an incongruous commercial sign). That is the extent of business on the mountain. There are a handful of commuters who work off the mountain, but most permanent residents are older and retired. The state remains the largest employer with about ten men working in the county-administered Mt. Everett Reservation and the Mount Washington State Forest. Three live in Mount Washington.

Mrs. Whitbeck and her husband, Mervin, who died in 1961, ran a deer camp on the mountain from many years - one frequent customer was Babe Ruth. The 3,000 acres were purchased by the state, which now owns more than 5,200 acres on the mountain.

"They're squeezing us out," says Mrs. Whitbeck. "Oh, eventually, and we don't want this to happen, they will own the whole mountain and it will be a state park."

The state owns about 35% of Mount Washington. It's land includes a primitive camping area 2 miles into the woods of Alandar (open all year round, by permit from forest office) and miles of snowmobile and bridle trails. It would like to own more. "Nobody wants the state to come in," says Forest and Park Supervisor Les Perry, but people should realize that their land will be protected with state forest next to it — everything will be kept in its natural unspoiled condition." Whatever the merits or drawbacks to state-owned property — it is generally agreed that no one wants to see the town filled up with little houses. Like the infamous Vietnam rationale, "we had to destroy the town to save it," developing Mount Washington would save it from slipping towards zero population. And sooner or later along would come the grocery store, the gas station, the snack shop, the gift shop; and after a while the "town among the clouds," unchanged for so long, would be no more.

The Cinderella Tree

by Ruth Krauss

Pictures by Maurice Sendak

Once upon a long time ago, a Mr. and Mrs. Tree had a tree-baby.

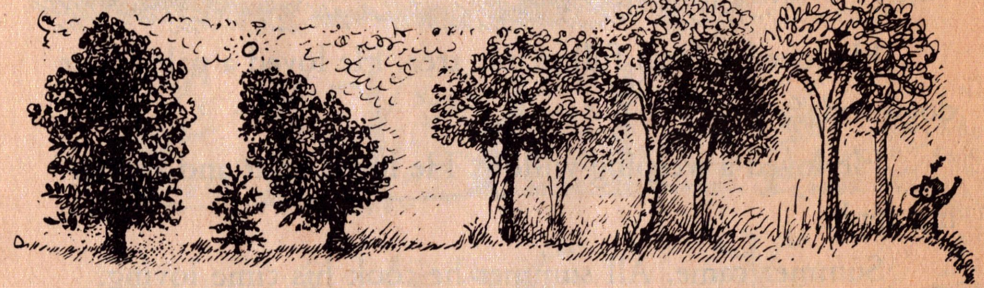
"It's a girl!" they cried.

"And so delightfully different!" Mrs. Tree observed, bending over her little one. "We must name her a name as lovely and unusual as herself."

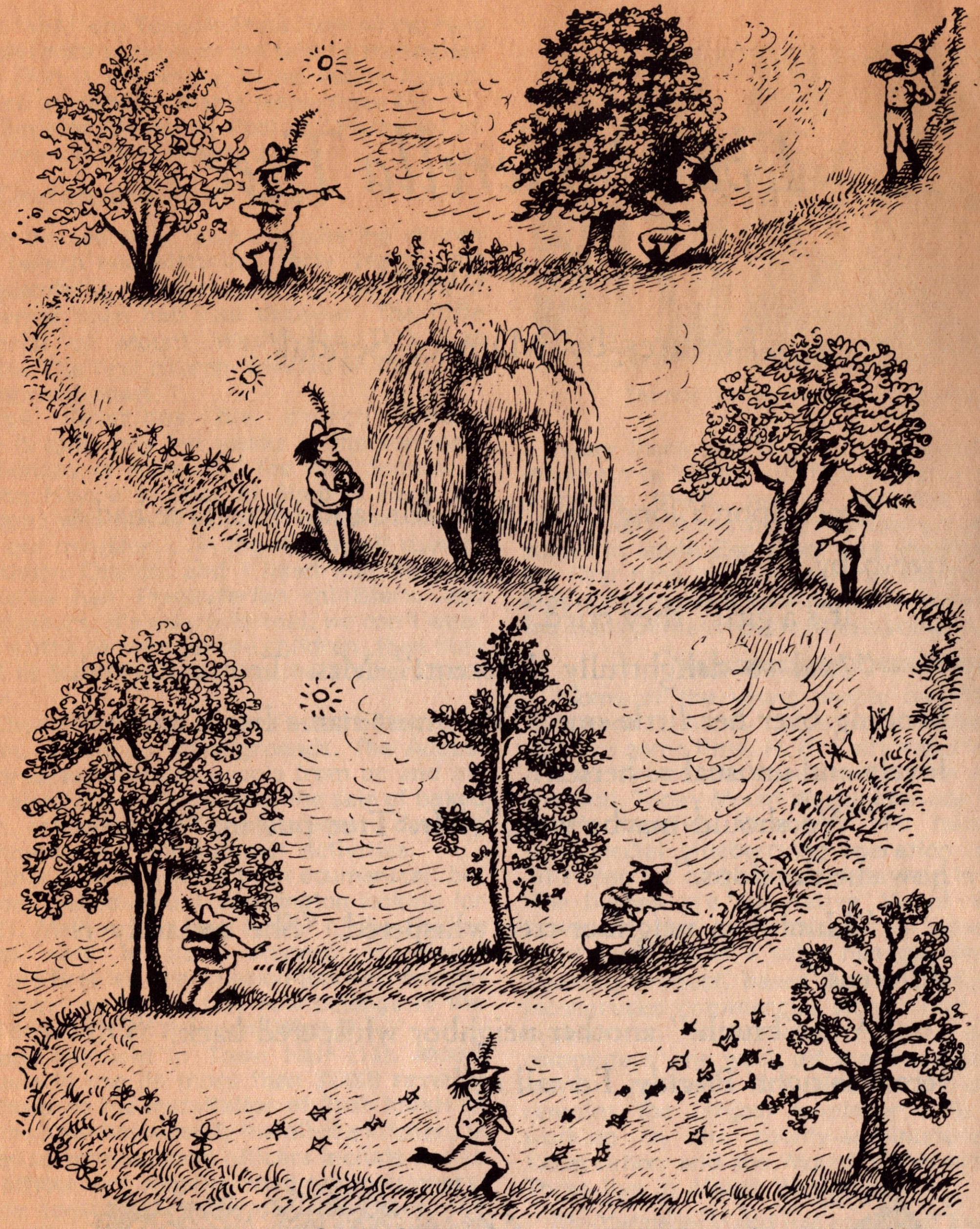
"We should maybe wait," Mr. Tree put in, "and see how she develops."

"Hunh!" a neighbor-tree whispered. "She certainly is different."

And "Hunh!" another neighbor whispered back. "Different is right! Prickly, I'd call it."



Now, time passed and the little one's first spring came. And, it happens, there was a fine Prince out wanting to be wooing, who seeing the forests so filled with the green of budding tree-girls, said to himself, said he, "I should take my time loving because a wedding is for keeps." So, all spring he took his time loving. The air was light and sweet.



He loved a fresh full maple tree. He loved a pale white dogwood.

He loved a weeping willow. He loved a fat and blooming apple.

Summer came. All summer he took his time loving.

He loved a thin tall poplar.

He loved a spreading chestnut tree.

"I am right to take my time loving," he said. "So many beautiful tree-girls! And a wedding is for keeps."

Autumn came. And the trees grew more beautiful even than before. The wood was wild with yellows and reds and purples. All autumn the Prince took his time loving.

Winter came. And then, on the branches of the beautiful tree-lasses, the leaves of yellow and red and purple, the leaves that had once been green, shriveled and fell. The trees were bare. The trees were bleak. "I sure was right!" the Prince cried, "to take my time loving. Look, oh look, at the beauties now. I want a steady. Not one to come and go."

And then, before him suddenly, he saw a bright and shining young green thing, lovelier still among the dark ruins of his loves gone by.

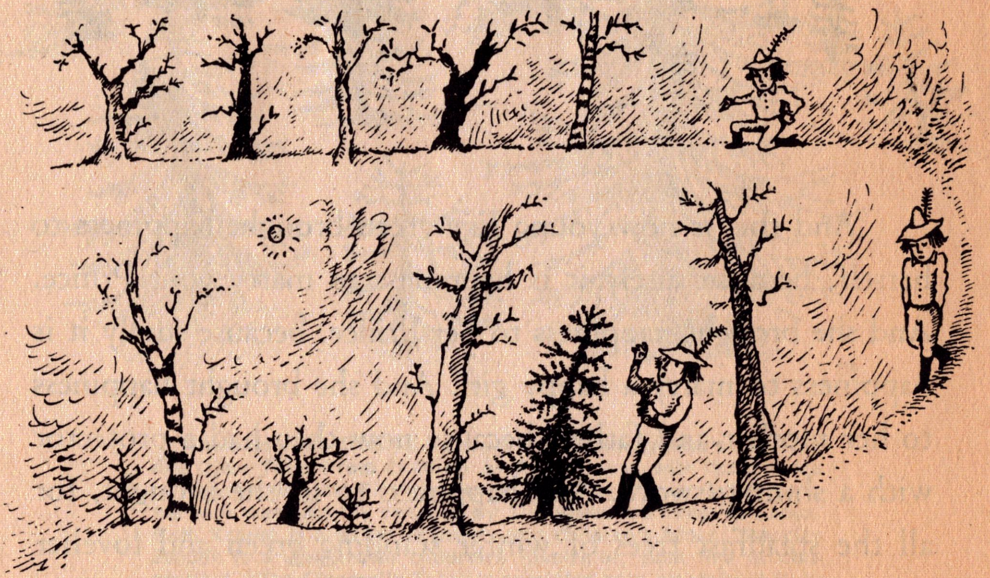
"How beautiful you are!" he cried. "Who are you? For surely I never saw the like before! You are the one I would wed, if thou wilt have me. I took my time to find you, because a wedding is for keeps."

The young green tree just stood there. She gave no answer because she had no name to give.

"Speak to me," the Prince begged. "Tell me yes."

Then, "Yes," the little tree whispered. "But I cannot tell you my name."

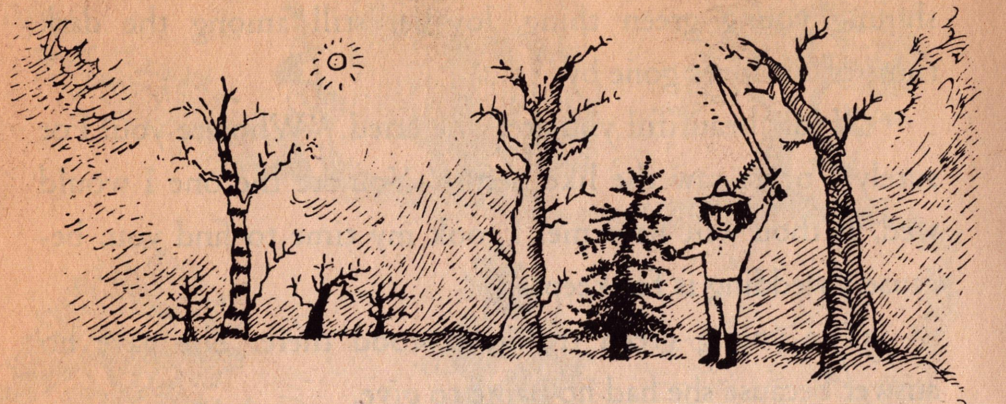
At this moment her mother and father spoke out, calling, "Now we know your name, our little one. Your name is Evergreen. We name you Evergreen."

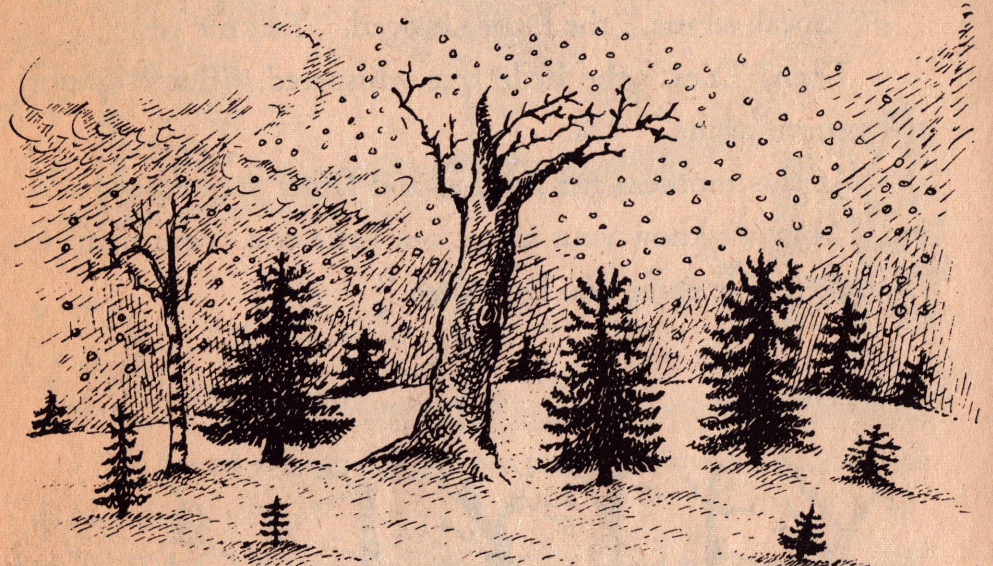


So the little tree told her Prince, "My name is Evergreen and yes, I said yes. I will thee wed."

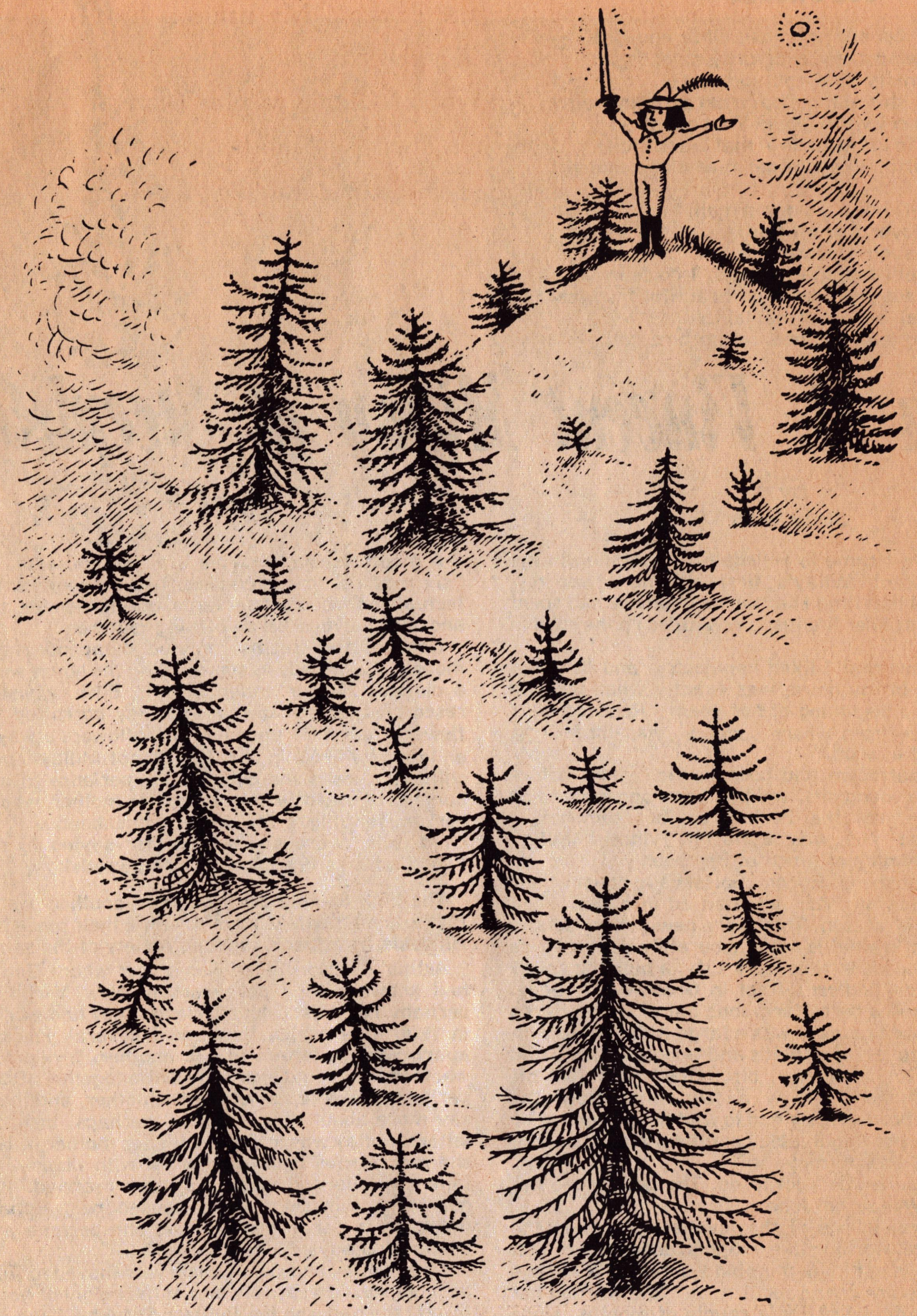
And so they were. And their wedding was for keeps.

And all the children took after their mother, and their children's children, and their children's children's children, right down to now.





And this is how young Evergreen brought happiness to herself, because surely it is happiness to marry your Prince. And she brought happiness to her Prince, because surely it is happiness to marry a happy girl. And she brought happiness to her mother and father, because now they had a protector with a shining sword. And happiness to us she brought, for all the steadfast trees of winter standing green and lovelier still among the goneby leaves of the year, now deep in the sleeping earth.



"The Cinderella Tree" is a story from **Somebody Else's Nut Tree And Other Tales From Children** by Ruth Krauss, with illustrations by Maurice Sendak. First published in 1958 by Harper & Brothers, the book was recently reissued by The Bookstore Press in Lenox. Ruth Krauss is a writer of poetry and children's books; Maurice Sendak is a well-known children's illustrator. Both live in Connecticut. "The Cinderella Tree" is reprinted here courtesy of Ruth Krauss, Maurice Sendak, and David Silverstein of The Bookstore Press.

GOD'S WORLD

O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!
Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!
Thy mists, that roll and rise!
Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag
And all but cry with colour! That gaunt crag
To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!
World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,
But never knew I this;
Here such a passion is
As stretcheth me apart,·-Lord, I do fear
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year;
My soul is all but out of me,-let fall
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

Edna St. Vincent Millay at Steepletop

by
Judy Gies

The first time I came to Hillsdale, I brought with me Edna St. Vincent Millay's first volume of poetry, **Renascence.** At that time I had no idea that she had spent the last 25 years of her life just a few miles up the road in Austerlitz.

But I did know that I liked her poetry, and the view from the back of my house was exactly what she had described at the beginning of her poem "Renascence": "All I could see from where I stood/ was three long mountains and a wood."

Of course, that poem had been written years before when she was a young girl, and the three long mountains were in Maine, not the Berkshires, but somehow I recognized that this was Edna St. Vincent Millay country, the country of much of her poetry.

She and her husband, Eugen Boissevain, bought their house, Steepletop, in 1925 - from an ad in a New York newspaper, sight unseen. They were newly married and had been living in what is quite accurately described as the narrowest house in New York City, a building only 9 1/ 2 feet wide on Bedford Street in Greenwich Village. Their new home - a berry farm long out of use - offered considerably more room. It was a large white house with over 600 beautiful acres of fields and woodlands, situated on East Hill Rd., a narrow, birch-lined road just off Route 22 in Austerlitz, only a few miles from the Massachusetts border. They had to wait three months for the house to be put into livable condition, but in June of 1925 they were able to move in.

Even then, there was a lot to do. The poet wrote her mother, Cora Millay, in June:

"Here we are, in one of the loveliest places in the world, I am sure, working like Trojans, dogs, slaves, etc. having chimneys put in, & plumbing put in, & a garage built, etc. — we are crazy about it. . ." She warned her mother to put off a visit for a couple of months, since guests were likely to be put to work digging a hole for the septic tank.

A month later she wrote that the household included "six masons, four plumbers, two carpenters, two ineffectual and transient servants, and fifteen insurbodinate and mischievous berry picking children."

None of this seems to have dampened her ardor, though. The meadows surrounding the house were full of a pink wildflower called Steeple Bush, whose flowers resembled church spires, and they borrowed the wildflower's name for the house. Wildflowers always played an important role in her life. One of Millay's poems for children recalls the childhood experience of gathering bunches of meadow flowers for her mother, who thanked her, exclaiming," Oh, what a fine bouquet!" But the child later overheard her mother saying to someone, "She's always dragging in those weeds!"

The pink Steeple Bush inspired another poet, Arthur Ficke, and his wife Gladys, to name their place in nearby Hillsdale, Hardhack, another variety of the same plant.

Arthur Davison Ficke was a poet whom Edna Millay had known during her years in New York. He was, perhaps, her most beloved friend. They had a brief affair in 1918, after which they spent several years, mostly apart, writing letters to one another, trying to decide whether they could ever have a life together. During this period they wrote sonnets to each other, and the sonnets say more about their feelings, perhaps, then did their letters. Millay was in Paris with her mother in 1922 when she met Gladys Brown, an artist with whom Ficke had fallen in love and whom he later married. Whatever heartache this must have caused her, Edna Millay managed to get through it, and she became a lifelong friend of Gladys Ficke's as well.

When Millay and Gene Boissevain moved to Austerlitz, the poet was 33 years old and at the height of her career. In 1922 she had won the Pulitzer Prize for "The Ballad of the Harp Weaver," plus an expanded edition of an earlier volume **A Few Figs from Thistles,** and eight sonnets published in an anthology. This was the first Pulitzer Prize in poetry to be won by a woman. Her legend was at its zenith, a legend based largely on a well-known quatrain written during her Greenwich Village period:

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes and oh, my friends -
It gives a lovely light!

Judy Gies graduated from Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts. She is a free lance writer living in Greenwich Village, New York City, and often spends weekends in the Berkshires.

"God's World" printed courtesy of Norma Millay Ellis.
from **RENASCENCE and Other Poems**
Harper & Brothers Publishers
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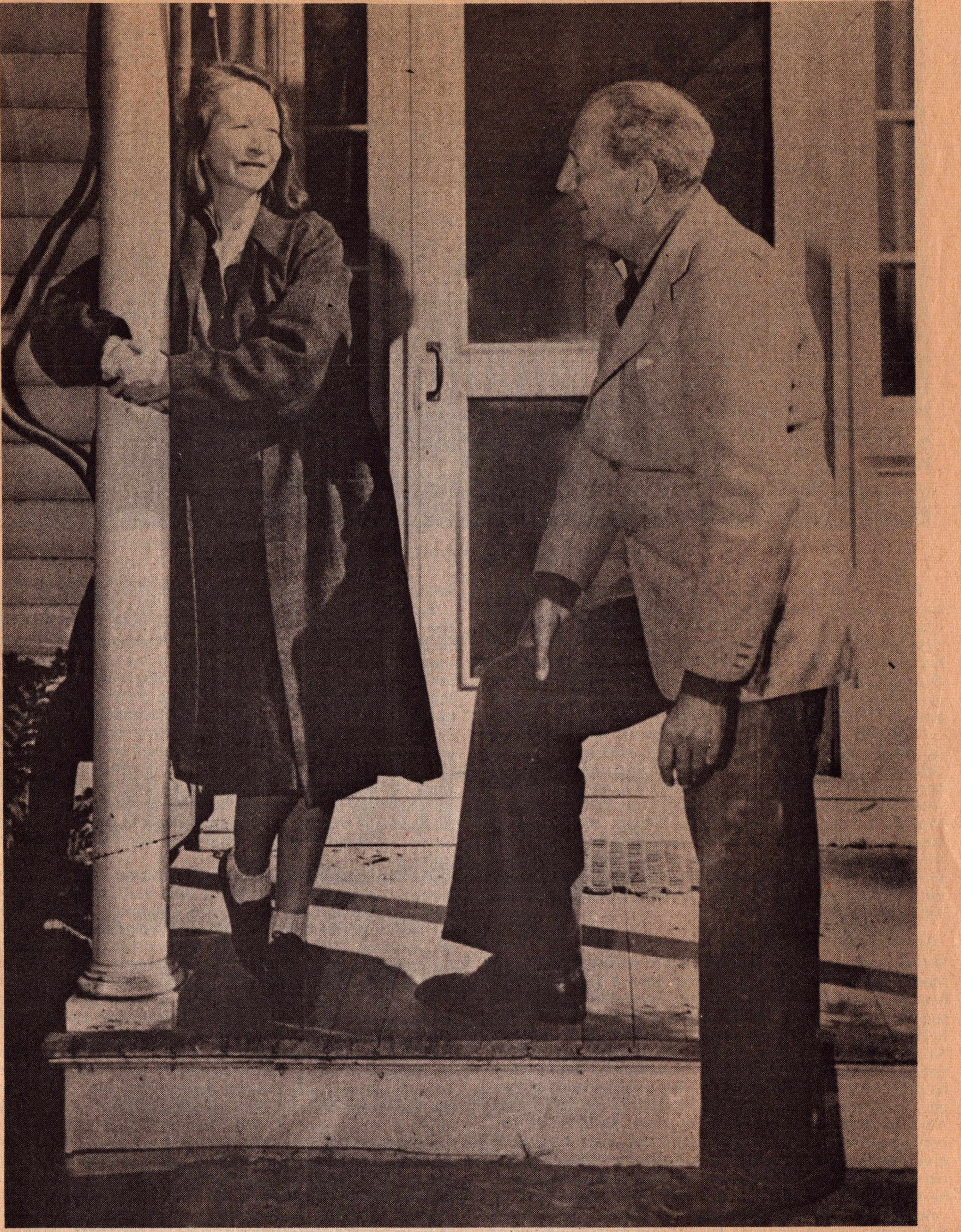

Edna St. Vincent Millay and Eugen Bossevain on the front steps of their home at Steepletop, in Austerlitz, New York.

Read

The home of Millay from 1925 until her death in 1950.

Edmund Wilson, one of her many suitors, wrote a memoir of the poet which is included in his volume of literary criticism, **The Shores of Light.** He describes his first meeting with her at a party after a performance of her play, Aria da Capo. It was done by the Provincetown Players, a new theatre group in the Village, and her sister Norma appeared in it. Millay arrived at the party and consented to read some of her poetry.

''She was dressed in some bright batik, and her face lit up with a flush that seemed to burn also in the bronze reflections of her not yet bobbed reddish hair. She was one of those women whose features are not perfect and who in their moments of dimness may not seem even pretty, but who, excited by the blood, or the spirit, become almost supernaturally beautiful. She was small, but her figure was full, although she did not appear plump. She had a lovely and very long throat that gave her the look of a muse, and her reading of her poetry was thrilling.''

Boissevain had been married to Inez Mulholland, who had been at Vassar before Millay was there. Boissevain's first wife had been a suffragette, a beautiful and flamboyant women who died young. He seemed to have an affinity for strong women, committed to their work, who, he felt, needed looking after. He was an interesting man, strong and masculine, yet with a gentle streak. He was making a substantial living when he met the poet. His family in Holland had built an import business in Indonesia, and when he came to New York he opened his own firm in lower Manhattan, importing coffee and sugar. Within a few years he was to give up his business entirely and devote himself to the work at Steepletop. ''Anybody can buy and sell coffee;'' he said, ''but not anybody can write poetry.'' It was he who restored Steepletop to the working berry farm it had once been, and he who took care of the myriad details of daily life. He also took charge of their social schedule, which depended on how deeply Millay was involved in her writing and in later years, on the state of her health.

Success had cometo Edna Millay very early. At 19 in the town of Camden, Maine, she had won natioal recognition for her long poem, ''Renascence''. From then on, she was never really out of the spotlight, even during her college years at Vassar. She was one of those few poets who managed to avoid the chronic problem of obscurity, the years of laboring unrecognized and poor. There were money problems from time to time, but it is probably safe to say that she never, from the day she published that early poem, had any trouble selling her work. When she needed money badly, she sometimes published poetry or light articles under the name Nancy Boyd, since she felt very strongly about using her real name for anything but what she considered serious writing.

Check Library

By the summer of 1926 the couple had completed an extra wing on the house and Eugen had actually begun selling fruit and berries. Edna had fixed up a shack behind the house, and there she spent a good part of each day writing. That summer she was working on a libretto for an opera, entitled ''The King's Henchman,'' on which she was collabroating with composer Deems Taylor. Taylor had been commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera Company to write the first American opera to be produced there. The project was ambitious - a tracing of the English language back to its Anglo-Saxon roots, and she therefore had to confine herself only to words derived from the language before the Norman invasion. It was an exacting and time-consuming job, and she must have spent a lot of time in her little writing shack. She installed a stove and worked through the winter. Gene rode his horse, or sometimes walked, down for the mail, and during the winter it was quite a project. The first winter in the house, Edna wrote to her friend Franklin Pierce Adams, the journalist who is perhaps most famous for his compilation of **FPA's Quotations,** that the house was ''an island in the snow.'' ''Gene has to walk five miles on snowshoes, coming and going, to post this letter and fetch the mail!''

The opera was performed at the Met in 1927. It was a huge success. All through her life, music played almost as important a role as literature. As children in Maine, the Millay girls, Edna, Norma and the youngest, Kathleen, were raised by a resourceful mother who encouraged their various talents and imparted to them her love for music. As very young children, they played an old piano and sang opera. Their mother, who had separated from her husband after only a few years of marriage, supported the family by practical nursing, but she knew a good deal about music and gave her daughters a taste for it which they carried with them all their lives. Kathleen later became a writer too, and published three volumes of poetry and two novels before her death in 1943. Norma became a singer and actress. She married Charles Ellis, a painter and actor. The three girls never forgot the sacrifices their mother made for them, and credited her spirited support for their later successes.

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Edna Millay found music a source of comfort, and sometimes a rapturous experience. One of her most beautiful sonnets, ''On Hearing a Symphony of Beethoven,'' describes the ecstasy she felt upon hearing classical music.

At one end of the large living room at Steepletop were two grand pianos. Every year Esther Adams, a pianist and the wife of Franklin Pierce Adams, came to Austerlitz to celebrate her birthday with her friend Edna. Part of the tradition included piano duets. Vincent Sheean, who wrote a memoir of the poet called **The Indigo Bunting,** recalled one birthday, later in the 1940's when he was included in the festivities, and Edna and Esther Adams performed a recital of the Brahams-Hayden Variations. It was, apparently, a magical weekend. Aside from the music, there was poetry. Millay recited some of her favorites from Keats, Shelley, Gerard Manley Hopkins and her own work. A year later, Vincent Sheean, discussing the weekend with Esther Adams, recalled that they had had rainy weather the entire time. ''Weather?'' Esther Adams replied, ''Was there any weather?''

Check

It was the opposite end of the living room which most fascinated Sheean, and which set the tone for his portrait of Millay. At that end of the room was a large window, and in front of it, an armchair. Here the poet sat and watched the birds which came to eat the seeds she had scattered on the window sill. It was during this visit that Sheean, who knew little about birds, observed a brilliant blue one alight on the sill, and was informed by the poet, somewhat appalled by his ignorance, that it was an indigo bunting. On occasion, birds even flew into her bedroom and hopped about on the floor eating the seeds she had put down for them. She scoffed at the idea that there was any sort of mystical connection between herself and them, but other people noticed that wherever she went, birds seemedto follow. When Vincent Sheean and Esther Adams visited Edna and Eugen at their house in Ragged Island, Maine, he noticed that the gulls circled about her head when she walked on the cliffs.

The house in Maine offered another kind of haven. The couple bought an island in Casco Bay in 1933. Edna had grown up on the coast of Maine, and throughout her life she felt a recurrent need for the sea. Even in Austerlitz, a longing for the ocean came over her and the lushness of the Berkshires seemed almost too rich in comparison with the spare beauty of the coast. In one poem, ''Mist in the Valley'' she is reminded by the fog-covered hills around Steepletop of islands in a bay, and plaintively asks herself what she, raised next to the sea, is doing ''tilling an upland ground.''

Eugene and Edna were in Austerlitz in the spring and

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fall though, and the rhythms of the country were a ruling principle in their lives. Millay was deeply in touch with the cycles of planting and harvesting, and much of her poetry reflects her feeling for the soil for her flowers and herbs. One verse of a three-part poem called Steepletop might be the cry of any poet/ gardener:

Even you, Sweet Basil; even you,
Lemon Verbena: must exert yourselves now and
    somewhat harden
Against untimely frost; I have hovered you and covered
    you and kept going smudges,
Until I am close to worn - out. Now, you
Go about it. I have other things to do,
Writing poetry, for instance. And I, too,
Live in this garden.

The 1930's were a busy time. There were poetry readings, and traveling, and farming as well. Part of almost every winter was spent in a warm climate, usually Florida, and there was a trip to Europe. By the summer of 1930 Eugen was marketing berries in quantity. Edna was riding her horse and playing tennis, in addition to writing. There was a famous houseparty that summer too, a kind of collective effort, with the Fickes in Hillsdale and various other neighbors pitching in to create a gala weekend at Steepletop. There was even a play - a theatre company performed for some fifty guests, quantities of wine were consumed, and everyone was very merry. Edmund Wilson recalls that during Prohibition most of their liquor was in the form of apple products. At a time when people had to fall back on their own resources, the Berkshires were a good place to live. They drank apple wine and apple brandy, but they also imported grapes from California and made wine from Gene's favorite French recipies.

There was also music at Steepletop. At that time there was a summer music school in Hillsdale, the Bloch Hillsdale Music College, and one summer Gene and Edna invited two students to stay with them. There was peace and privacy and those two grand pianos - an enviable setup for any student. Alexander Bloch, founder of the music school, often came to stay with them and practice his music.

"The King's Henchman" was bringing in gate receipts and royalities . Biographer Jean Gould speculates that this money might have built their five car garage with studio apartment. They also put in a tennis court, a swimming pool and a sunken garden.

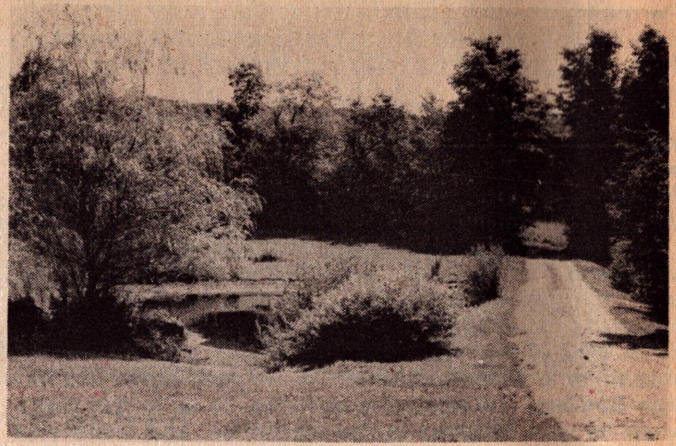
Mrs. Cora Millay died in February, 1931, and her daughter brought her to Steepletop to be buried there. The relationship between Edna and her mother had been an extremely close one, and this death was one of the most traumatic experiences in the poet's life. In a letter to friends, two months after her mother's death, she said of Cora Millay: "We had a grand time. But it's a changed world. The presence of that absence is everywhere."

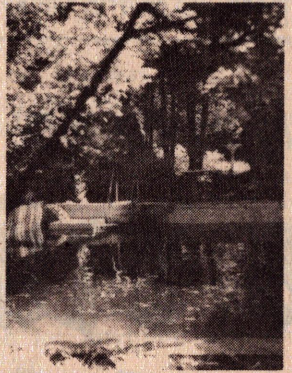
The death of Millay's mother was only the beginning of a period of great difficulties for the poet. Edna was suffering recurrent ill health. During a stay in Europe before her marriage she developed intestinal trouble that lingered for a year. In fact, the day after she married Gene she went into the hospital for an operation, which finally cleared this up. She also had trouble with her arm. One night as she and Gene were driving home, the door on her side of the car flew open, and she was thrown down the slope of a curve and hurt her back. Later, there were mysterious headaches and trouble with her eyes. In October 1930 she wrote Arthur Ficke:

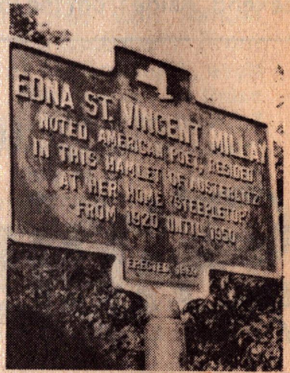
"It's not true that life is one damn thing after another — it's one damn thing over & over - there's the rub - first you get sick - then you get sicker - then you get not quite so sick - then you get hardly sick at all - then you get a little sicker - then you get a lot sicker - then you get not quite so sick - oh, hell. . ."

Her husband looked after her like a mother hen, arranging her schedule and shooing visitors away if they stayed too long. They also frequently disconnected the phone to avoid interruptions, and Gene had to walk or ride close to five miles to the Austerlitz general store to use the telephone.

Jean Gould reports that at one point Robert Frost's daughter, Lesley, who ran a bookshop in Pittsfield, arranged a poetry reading for Edna Millay. Part of the attraction for the audience was the prospect of meeting the poet, but Eugen whisked her out of the room the minute she had finished reading, leaving a disgruntled audience with unsigned books and unshaken hands.


The pond at Steepletop.


The spring-fed swimming pool.



Historical marker. (The date 1920 is incorrect. It should read 1925.)

In 1931 Harper's published what some consider her best volume of poetry, **Fatal Interview,** a collection of sonnets which trace the course of a love affair from its passionate beginnings to its painful end. The sonnets were based on a love affair in the poet's life, although no one was ever sure who was involved. For some time, as Millay put it, she and Eugen had been living "like two bachelors." The Millay-Boissevain marriage was an open one, before open marriages were fashionable, but apparently it worked.

When war broke out in Europe, Millay started writing anti-war poetry, protesting the monstrous rise of Hitler. Although she had always been quick to throw herself into causes, which had included an earlier reaction against the Sacco-Vanzetti case in Massachusetts, this time her concern was probably motivated in part by sympathy for her Dutch husband, whose country was being overrun by the Germans. She later said that she had intended the poems only as propaganda, and had wanted them issued in pamphlet form and distributed to help awaken Americans to the plight of Europe. But her publishers in 1940 gathered the poems into a volume **Make Bright the Arrows** and sold it as serious verse, but the critics attacked the book unmercifully. During the war years there were no reading tours, and the couple lived quietly, sticking to the rationing laws and driving a horse and buggy to conserve gasoline.

By 1940, money was in short supply, and Steepletop had to be mortgaged. Doctor's bills were eating up most of their money, and Eugen's small investment savings were gone. His family's business in Holland had failed with the advent of war. The couple still entertained occasionally, played tennis and partied now and then, but their social life was becoming more and more curtailed, and Edna was suffering emotional problems as well as physical ones. The strains that had been building up finally became too much for her, and in 1944 she spent several months in Doctors Hospital in New York. Then, in 1945, Arthur Ficke died of cancer. He was buried at Hardhack and at the funeral Edna read passages from Milton's "Lycidas", one of his favorite poems. She also read a sonnet from an earlier volume of poetry, **Second April,** written during that period before her marriage when she had been in love with Ficke. In the years that followed she had denied that it had been written about him, but before he died she wrote and confessed that it had; she had only denied it because "I didn't want you to know, for sure, how terribly, how sickeningly, in love with you I had been." The sonnet she read at his burial begins, "And you as well must die, beloved dust."

The poet spent many hours writing in this shack in the woods behind her house.

She then sank into an even deeper depression. Visitors came to Steepletop and left abruptly when Edna burst into tears or suddenly stopped talking to them altogether.

Vincent Sheean, recalling his visit with her in Maine, describes her as looking "very frightened, small, and withdrawn." At that time, the summer of 1945, she was going through a period of being unable to write, of feeling dried up, and feared that her creativity was gone. Sheean writes:

"Miss Millay was, to put it bluntly, a frightening apparition to many of us. Her temperment was so variable that it was impossible to tell what mood might overwhelm her next; and she was obviously so painfully sensitive that any untoward phrase or sudden noise could thrust her into a private hell from which she might not emerge for days."

Then, in 1949, Eugen developed lung trouble, was operated on in Boston and died almost immediately afterward. Now the mainstay of her life was gone. She and Gene had developed a long-standing friendship with Mary Herron, the postmistress in Austerlitz, and she helped Edna answer the many condolence notes that came in. Edna wrote Mrs. Herron a note one day, saying that it must seem impossible to her that Eugen wouldn't be coming down the hill for the mail on such a beautiful fall day, and added sadly that "he never came up the hill, either, anymore."

After her husband's death the poet went into another period of depression, and once again landed in Doctors Hospital for several weeks before she was able to return to Steepletop. During the last years of his life Eugen had devoted himself to her utterly, and in addition to her grief, she was suddenly faced with all the details of daily life that he had handled for so long. Many people have commented on the way Eugene babied Edna, arranging her meals, monitoring her social schedule, even referring to her as "my child." Despite this apparent lapse into helplessness, Edna Millay was a strong woman, and when she left the hospital she insisted on staying alone at Steepletop. Everyone was worried about her, but she wouldn't hear of anyone coming to stay with her. The one person she did ask, her sister Norma, was herself suffering from ill-health and could not come. The only people she saw with any regularity were John Pinnie, a neighboring farmer and friend who came to help with the chores, and Lena Reusch, another neighbor who also helped out occasionally.

When some of her grief had abated, Millay began working feverishly. She was producing so much poetry, and working with such intensity, that she begrudged any time spent with visitors, and became obsessed with being alone, for fear that she might lose the creative impetus she had recovered. The poems she wrote during this period were later gathered by her sister into a volume entitled **Mine the Harvest,** published in 1954 after the poet's death. It was an appropriate title for a collection of poetry that looked back on a life often controversial, sometimes difficult, and occasionally tragic. Through all the highs and lows, the crises, and all the emotional turmoil of her life, Millay had thrown herself into events, relationships and passions. She had never shrunk from commitment. In 1917 she wrote in a letter to a friend; "Enormity does not frighten me; it is only among tremendous things that I feel happy and at ease. . ." This final collection of poetry weighs her life in the balance and finds it rich and fruitful. The idea of a harvest was central to her life, her poetry and her beloved garden.

Millay lived to be 58. On October 19, 1950, during the early hours of the morning, she put down some galley proofs she had been reading and started up the stairs to bed. She sat down on the landing, just outside the small library where she had collected all the poetry she loved, put down the half bottle of wine and the glass she was carrying, and died. John Pinnie brought the milk in the morning, but didn't notice anything amiss and left again. It wasn't until mid-afternoon, when he came back with firewood, that he found her.

The funeral was held at Steepletop. Norma and Charles Ellis were there, and a few close friends and relatives. Norma read a selection of her sister's poetry, as did Allen Ross Macdougall, a friend from her days with the Provincetown Players. Esther Adams played one of her friends favorite pieces of music, Beethoven's "Appassionata." The poets body was cremated, and her ashes were buried next to her husband's in the Steepletop laurel grove.

Norma Millay Ellis has lived at Steepletop since her sister's death, and she has welcomed many visitors there. "They are people who loved and worshipped my sister," she says. Mrs. Ellis tells of one young girl who came up the path recently, with her mother waiting in the car. Responding to the knock, she told the girl she was Edna St. Vincent Millay's sister, "Ooohhhhh," the girl cried, as she threw her arms around Mrs. Ellis and wept on her shoulder.

1974

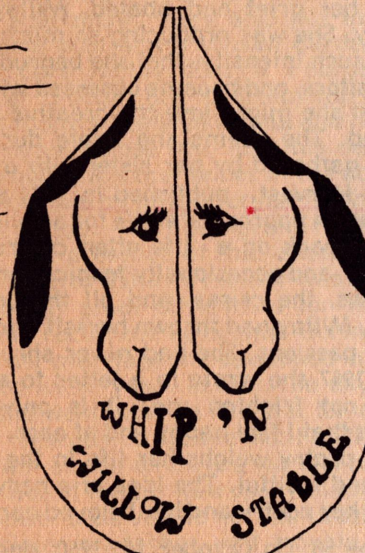
Mrs. Norma Ellis held a gathering at Steepletop on May 18th of this year. Edna Millay's home had been designated a National Historic Landmark in 1972, and a representative of the U.S. Department of the Interior took this opportunity to present a plaque to her sister. But the main event of the day was Mrs. Ellis' announcement that Steepletop will become a retreat for artists, composers and writers, to be sponsored by the Millay Colony for the Arts. It will be partly modeled after the famous MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire, and the organization is now raising funds and making preliminary renovations. Last year the New York Council on the Arts pledged a grant of $30,000, $20,000 of which was matched by the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, $10,000 of which is still to be matched.

Among the speakers at the May 18 gathering was Russell Lynes, a former president of the MacDowell Colony who lives just across the state line in North Egremont, Massachusetts, and Professor Frank Calders, who spoke of Millay's great contribution to American letters. Other visitors welcomed by Norma Millay were Conrad Spohnholz, General Director of the MacDowell Colony and Treasurer of the Millay Colony, and distinguished actors Roscoe Lee Browne and Anthony Zerbe, both of whom flew in from California to read selections of Edna St. Vincent Millay's poetry for the occasion. Later that same day the Millay held it s first annual meeting of the corporation.

The formal opening of the Millay Colony will be in 1976, America's bicentennial year. Within the next two years additional money must be raised and construction of additional living space must be completed to provide for the accommodation of the 10 to 15 artists who will be in residence at any one time. To be open throughout this year, the Colony will be hosting 50 to 70 artists per year.

The project is a promising one and seems to be a happy fate for Steepletop. One imagines it would have pleased Edna Millay, who worked so fruitfully there and who opened her home to some of the young artists of an earlier time.

On one of his visits to Steepletop, Edmund Wilson was among a number of guests in the living room. He recalls that as the evening wore on, with conversation humming all around the room, he looked across at Edna. " "I had the curious and touching impression as Edna sat quietly in a big chair, that — torn and distracted by the winds that had swept her through many seas — she had been towed into harbor and moored, that she was floating at anchor there."



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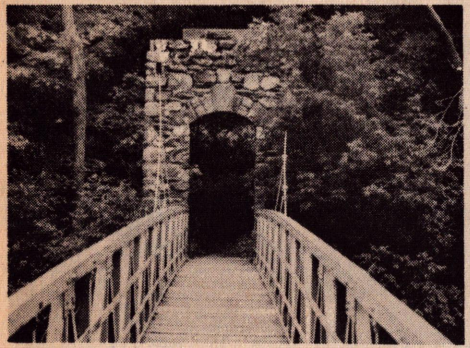
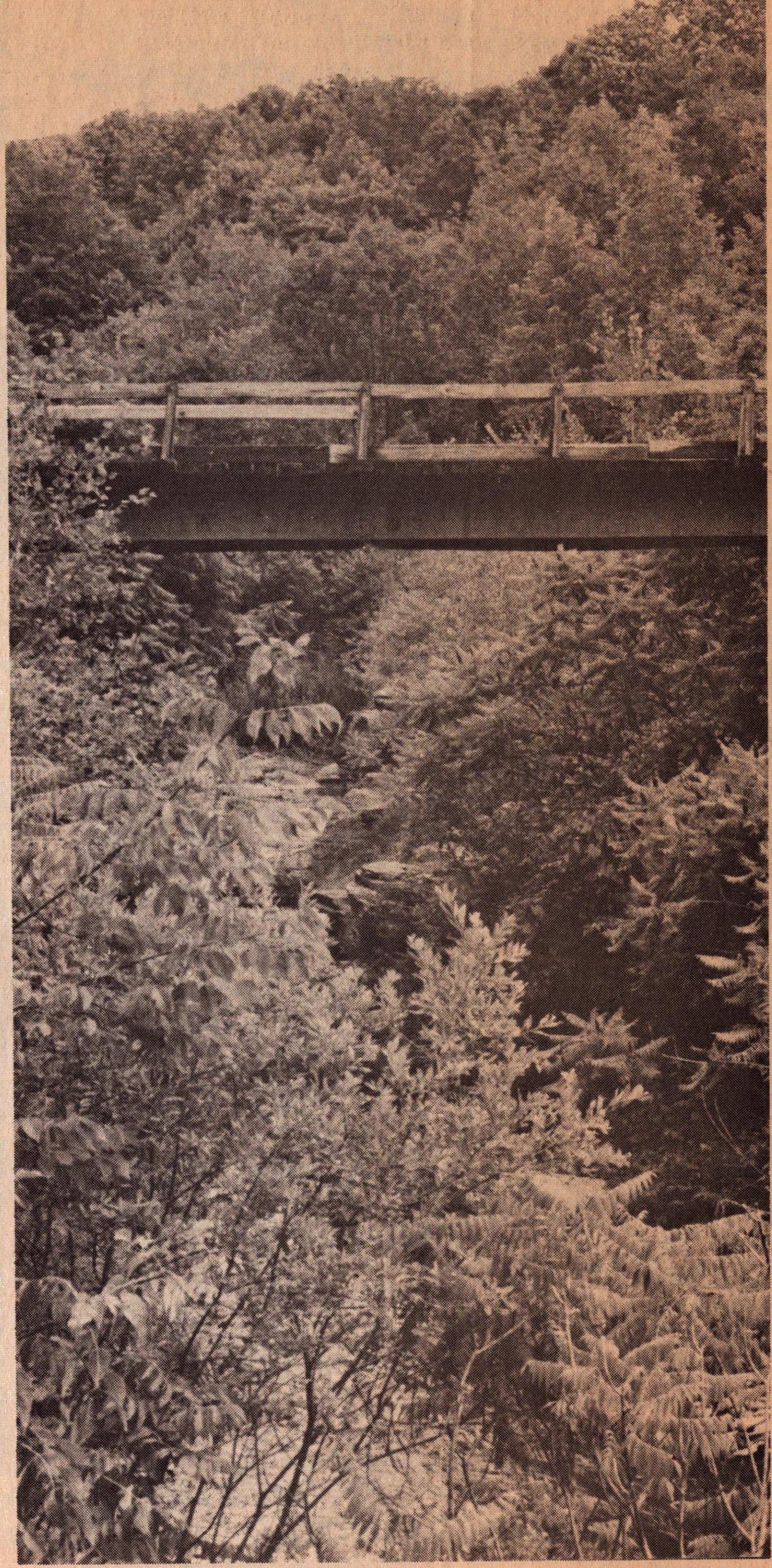
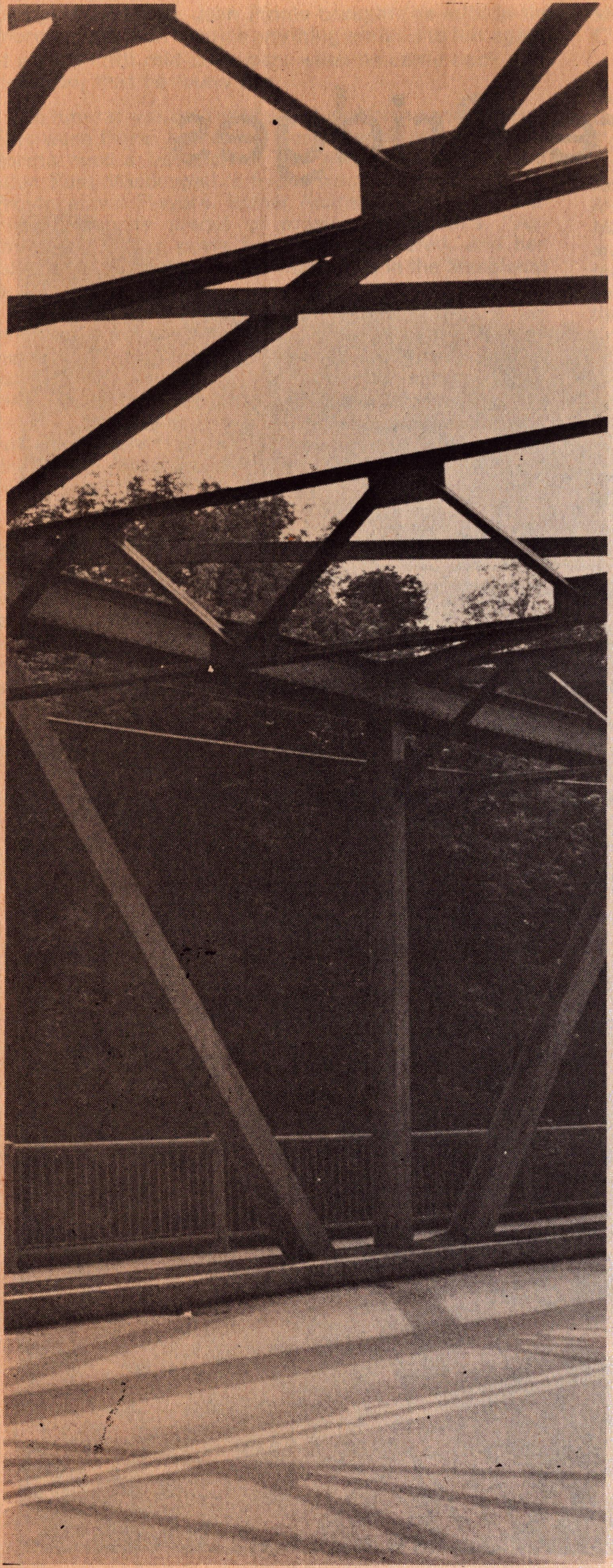
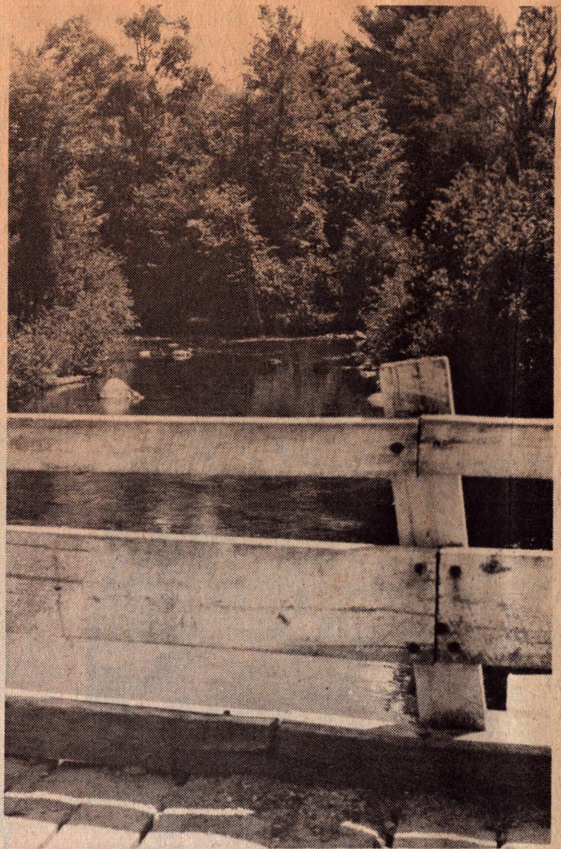

Memorial Bridge, Stockbridge footbridge erected by Laurel Hill Assoc. in 1936 to replace 1895 bridge given by Mary Hopkins Goodrich

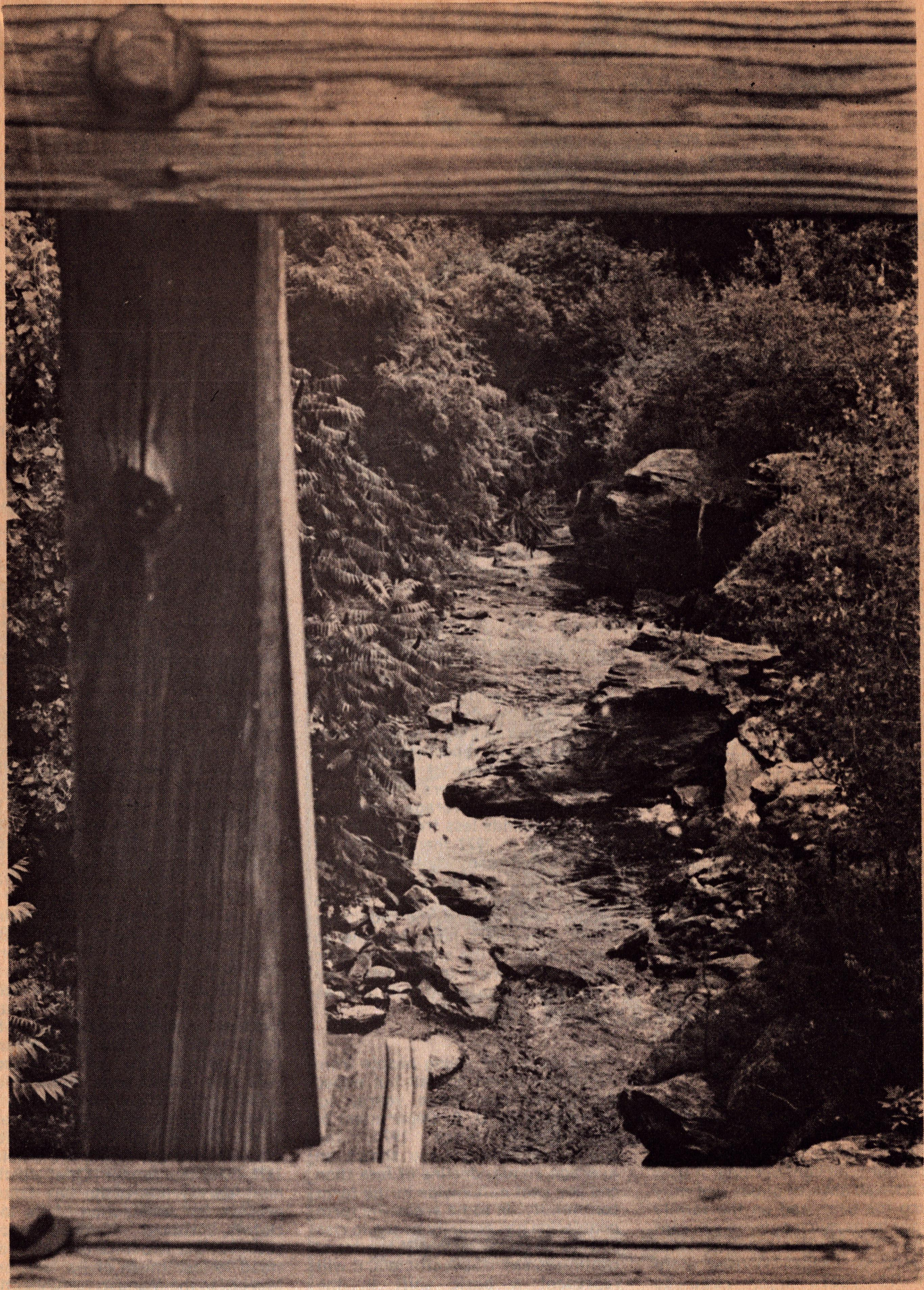

(R) Abandoned bridge off North Plain Road in Great Barrington





Bridge over the Konkapot, Mill River (above)
Modern bridge in Lee (left)

New Covered Bridge, Sheffield (above) View from abandoned bridge over Williams River (R)



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TOWN CRIER

The Berkshire Antique Bottle Association will hold its fall Antique Bottle Show and Sale at Lee High School, Greylock Street, Lee, on Sunday, October 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lee High School is about one mile from exit 2 of the Massachusetts Turnpike. The club has asked that, when feasible, car pools be formed to attend the show. Awards will be given for the best sales and the best exhibits, and Berkshire Antique Bottle Association members will be present to answer questions. Further information about the show can be obtained from Mrs. Carl Swenson, P. O. Box 297, Lee, Massachusetts 01238. Admission to the show is 50 cents for adults; free for children under 12.

According to one expert, the best gasoline mileage is achieved by driving at a steady rate of speed on a level road at 35 to 40 miles an hour. Accelerating, decelerating, idling and jack-rabbit starts all waste fuel. Emission controls in late model cars also cut gasoline mileage about 15 per cent. Air conditioning uses up something like one to two miles per gallon. And, of course, it's always helpful to keep your car's engine tuned, the timer set correctly, and the tires properly inflated.

For the safety's sake, keep that top burner pilot light burning. It uses only a small amount of gas and may reduce the heat load on the family furnace by as much as three per cent during the winter. The national standard for ranges, revised more than 15 years ago, requires automatic top burner lighting as a safety measure against the possibility of an accumulation of unburned gas in case someone neglects to light a burner that has been turned on. Be sure, however that the pilot light is adjusted properly, to burn with a clean flame and one that is not so small that it might be blown out with a sudden breeze.

Foods fresh from the farm have a peculiar taste to many of those who have been brought up on mass-produced, artificially flavored, processed foods. This was the conclusion drawn by the **Wall Street Journal** from a report issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, which, among others things, indicated that the average American ate four pounds less fresh fruit and vegetables in 1972 than in 1971. It appears that many consumers have never tasted certain foods in their natural forms, and some of the people who create the additives claim consumers have become so accustomed to the slightly metallic flavor of canned fruits that they reject freshly-squeezed fruit juice as not real.

The exodus of young people from American farms has all but ended during the past three years, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Since 1970, the population figures have shown an average annual decline of less than one per cent nationwide in the farm community. In some areas the farm population has actually begun to rise after a 60 year decline. If the trend continues, say USDA officials, it will represent a basic shift in the movement of population within the country. Since about 1910 high percentages of people between the ages of 18 and 29 have left farms areas, choosing instead to live in the nation's cities and suburbs.

Kathryn L. Burgess, from Old Chatham, New York, writes concerning the West Stockbridge article and Berkshire Bookshelf of the last issue: "I have found much supplementary information on the early border disputes between the Province of New York and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Recently, the original Indian deed to the land which became Spencertown, and later part of Austerlitz, was found in Springfield. It would be of even greater interest to locate the Indian deeds for New Britian and New Concord, parts of which are now in the Town of Chatham. The New York Land Papers in the State Library at Albany contain part of the story, referring to the original deed under the Massachusetts Bay Colony. I have a copy of the Power of Attorney given by the settlers of New Britain, in 1774, authorizing five men to act on their behalf, treating with commissioners of the King, to obtain titles to their land. One of these men, Elijah Hudson, was said to have been Connecticut Land Agent for six years. When he died, in 1799, he left land to his heirs in the Massachusetts Pre-Emption. Also, in William Smith's memoirs, 1776-1778, the former Chief Justice hints darkly that if the Bay Colony presses for satisfaction of its land claims, should "independency" succeed, the Province of New York stood to lose much of its territory. Indeed, in the Manuscript Collection at Queens College of the City of New York, there is a copy of the original grant to William, Viscount Say and Seal and associates, 19 Mar. 1631, showing New Albion stretching from sea to sea (Cape Mendocino), based on Sir Francis Drake's discoveries in California in 1578! So both Massachusetts and Connecticut had vast western claims. As to **Old Tombstones & Unusual Cemeteries in Columbia County,** Nathaniel Edgerton the younger lost his wife, married again, and moved to central New York State. Two more books are to be added to this one, to be published in the fall, as I have it from the author, who promises much more interesting material and photographs. . . My very best wishes for your new publication. There is a great interest and need in this area for publications of this nature, so I hope you will succeed, and the Counties of Berkshire and Columbia become good friends."

Another reader suggested that the mysterious Indian symbols pictured in the review of the Tombstone book in the summer issue of **Berkshire Magazine** might be a form of mirror writing. Hold this page up to a mirror and see what you think.

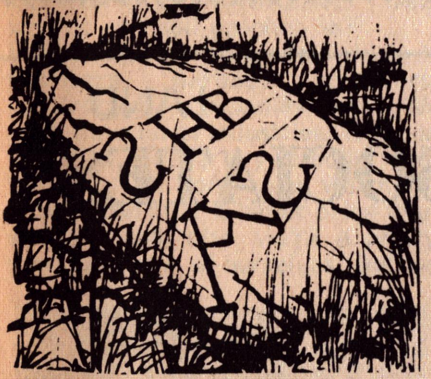
Illustration from **Old Tombstones & Unusual Cemeteries**

According to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, the colored pages in magazines may be a significant source of lead poisoning in children. Pages printed in color contain substantially more lead than those printed in black and white. Analysis of inks revealed the following ppm (parts per million) of lead: yellow - 29,000; red - 4100; blue - 445; black - 275. One investigator said that a child who repeatedly ingested a colored piece of magazine paper slightly less than two inches square, could be receiving daily doses of lead at a potentially hazardous rate. The moral: don't let your children chew on magazine pages, especially those printed in yellow or red.

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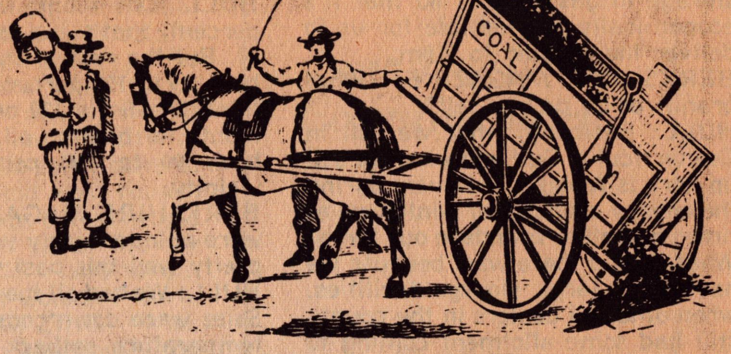


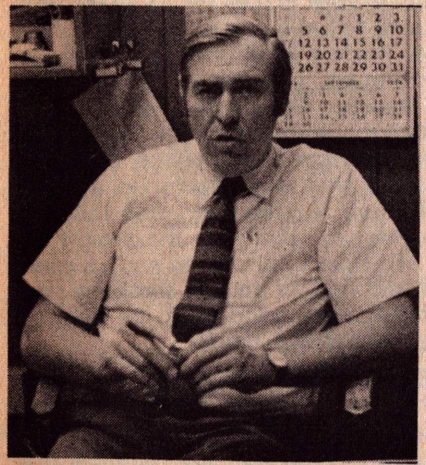
Three Local Experts Predict What's Ahead This Winter

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: You supply both heating oil and gasoline. With heating oil, do you deal mostly with individual homes?

HULL: We have some small companies that we service and some schools in the area and some resorts and restaurants, but basically we sell to home owners.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: And who do you sell gasoline to?

HULL: Consumer trade, which is plumbers, garbage collectors, construction companies, etc. We don't have large industries. Those in this area usually buy directly from the large oil companies which, of course, can offer a better price than we can. And, also, we're a pretty good customer of ourselves. But we



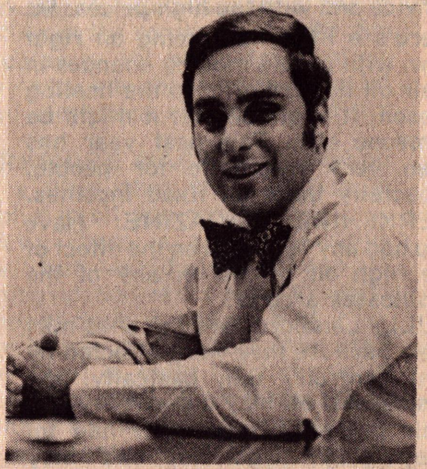
John B. Hull III is the fourth generation Hull to operate the J.B. Hull, Inc. oil company. Born and raised in Great Barrington, Mr. Hull started working for the company in 1955 and became president in 1965 when his father retired. J.B. Hull, Inc. distributes oil and gasoline in a 600 square mile area covering southern Berkshire County, northwestern Connecticut and a few locations in New York.

con't. on p. 34

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: A lot of Berkshire homes are heated by electricity. Could you give us a breakdown of what electric heating bills are, compared to the other electric utility bills?

ZOLLI: I can give you a general rule of thumb because I just had it done for myself in the house I'm now building in Great Barrington. If it's an electrically heated home, you can figure for, say a two story, seven room home, of approximately 2000 square feet, that the annual electric heating bill will be about $900. A family of four will use about $40 a month more for sundry uses.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Does most New England electricity come from oil?



Frank C. Zolli, a native of Newton, Massachusetts, graduated from Boston College in 1962. After a stint in the Navy, he joined the New England Electric system in 1967 and became publicity manager in 1969. Mr. Zolli became manager for the 15-town southern Berkshire area of the Massachusetts Electric Company in 1971. He is currently building a house in Great Barrington.

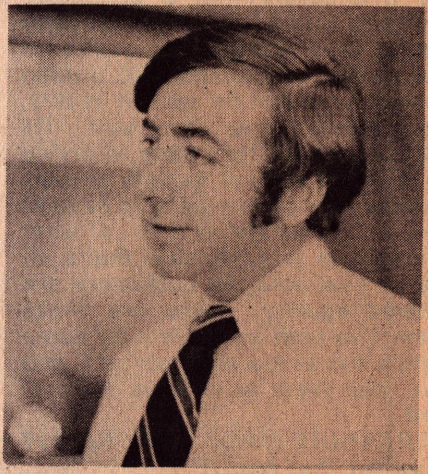
con't. on p. 36

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: You deal in both gasoline and home heating oil — heating oil goes to homes, and your gasoline goes where?

LIPTON: We have several institutional and commercial accounts for heating oil, but the bulk of it goes to homes. We deliver gas to five service stations which we own ourselves and to a few commercial accounts.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Is all your oil and gas BP?

LIPTON: Well, we have other sources, yes, but it's basically BP. Under the allocation program our supplier of record of 1972 is bound to take care of us for the amount of oil we purchased in that year, which is



Leonard Lipton, president of Lipton Oil Company, is a native of Pittsfield and a graduate of the Boston University Business School. His company distributes fuel oil to the central Berkshire region, including Pittsfield, Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge. Mr. Lipton was interviewed for the New York **Times** articles about the energy crisis in Pittsfield, and he went to Washington in 1973 to protest unfair fuel allocation practices.

con't. on p. 38

have no gas stations. We used to, but gas stations are more and more being serviced by the large oil companies. They are upgrading storage in gas stations so that it's economically not feasible for us to deliver the product to them.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What brands of oil do you sell?

HULL: Basically, what we sell in Connecticut is Gulf and what we sell up here is Mobil. However, during the energy crunch last winter we at times had other brands in our tanks. What we did there was, because we have very large storage facilities, when other oil dealers in the county still had some allotment coming to them but were unable to accept it in their tanks, we would take in in our tanks and then the next month deliver some of our oil to them. It was a matter of convenience, making sure that everyone's storage was kept full during this period. If we hadn't kept this product coming in there was a chance, under the allotment program, that we might lose it.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Do you have standard, long term contracts with the oil companies?

HULL: Well, all contracts are one year contracts, most of which are renewable. But, whether or not the contract is renewable, the allotment program we now have guarantees that you will get the product, which is one good aspect of the allotment program that the government has. You're not going to be shut off from your source of supply.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What exactly is the allotment?

HULL: The allotments are based on the availability that a particular company might have. So a company might have, during the month of December for example, 100 million gallons available for sale. If in 1972, the allotment year, they sold 110 million gallons, they have to divide up that 100 million gallons proportionately. So you're going to have 90 percent - or whatever it is - of what you took in 1972, because that's all the oil available. All customers are treated equally. There are times when I've seen allotments for some companies as low as 60 percent, and I've seen them as high as 170 percent.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Really? It varies that much?

HULL: Well, you have to realize that the 170 percent figure was this summer when a lot of these companies wanted to fill their storage in certain areas. So, in order to get that oil out in the field, into storage like mine, they give out a lot. The allotment doesn't mean that much in the summer when you don't need it in the first place.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What's the lowest allotment that your company has had?

HULL: One month we were at 90 percent, that's the lowest we were at. But the rest of the time it's all been 95 to 100 percent. Right now I think Mobil is 120 percent for this month for heating oil. Gasoline has been 90 to 100 percent, in that vicinity.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So you were able to supply your customers pretty well this past winter?

HULL: We had all the oil we needed. Sales were down considerably. The temperature setback worked very well. Just in my own house we ended up with about a net nine or 10 percent drop in gallons due solely to keeping the heat down. We saved about 17 or 18 percent of our consumption, taking the warm weather into consideration.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So a person who is buying a house now, he has no problem signing up for heating oil?

HULL: We keep in touch with the real estate people as much as possible to find out who's buying new houses. And we try to retain accounts for the houses we've had. One important thing about the allotment is that the house owns the allotment, not the person.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: And what about someone building a new house?

HULL: This is the new share of business I was talking about. Part of that attrition rate, especially in the last year, is people that have become dissatisfied with their oil service and with the high prices. So, there's a little float going on right now, with people making changes in their oil dealers prior to the heating season. It might be me; it might be someone else. This past year has been very traumatic for people, especially those on fixed incomes.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Have you had any feedback on the effect of the high oil prices on any of the businesses around?

HULL: Landlords are the ones hurt most because they were affected by rent controls. But, basically, the businesses, all they did was to raise their prices. I mean they had to. They didn't want to, and they haven't increased their profits. A few people have been stuck with it, like the farmers who are always on the wrong end of the stick.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Well, what do you expect the situation to be this coming winter?

HULL: I would say they'd be about the same. As far as requirements go, that would depend on the winter. One of these days we're going to have a cold winter — we haven't had one for three years now. And there are two critical items forthcoming: one is the possibility of a coal miners' strike; number two is the possibility of the large refinery strike. And the possibility is always present that we could be embargoed again. If these things don't happen, we should be in beautiful shape this winter; in better shape than last winter, because we have more oil in storage now than we did at this time last year.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So if the Arab-Israeli War broke out again tomorrow, we could get through the winter?

HULL: I don't know that we could stand another embargo. I don't know that they could stand another war. One of these times the Israelis are going to bomb a refinery or two and that would knock everything for a loop, because that would hit the Arabs right where it hurts the most, in the pocketbook. I think one of the biggest items we in the Northeast need is a refinery. We have to sit down and hash out the environmental question and decide whether we're going to continue to pay these high prices and whether we're going to continue to rely on these foreign sources. Right now we are paying more for transportation in the Northeast than anyplace, and that's where a lot of the price of oil comes in. Exploration is the key now. With the natural gas industry this is coming home to roost right now. They've frozen prices at the wells for 23 years now. You just can't freeze prices for 23 years and expect to have any exploration. And now there's a natural gas shortage coming up. This is a big thing to the oil people. Gas companies are still soliciting homes for heat, yet when the shortage hits, they're going to have to shut down factories and oil will have to take over, and that, of course, will diminish the supply of oil. This isn't fair. When you've gone out and sold an item to someone you should, in all good faith, be able to keep supplying them.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Can you estimate what the average cost of heating a house is?

HULL: I would say somewhere between $700 and $900 now. As far as what the price of heating oil is going to be this winter, I'm just hoping and praying it stays about where it is. But there are more indications that it will go up than there are that it will go down.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What about gasoline?

HULL: I don't know. The supply situation is currently artificially high, so you might get a small discount. But, in the long run, I don't think the price of any petroleum product is going to decline significantly.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: It seems as though you're saying that right now things are all right—that supplies are high—but that in the long term there's a problem, and that there are a number of factors any of which, if they occur, could really throw a wrench into the situation. Is this a fair summary?

HULL: You could sit down and list—yes, that's true—but the oil industry is such a complex situation that you sit down and list hundreds of reasons why this should happen and hundreds of reasons why that should happen, but the outstanding symptoms that face us now— I'm more of a pessimist than an optimist. I have no faith anymore that things are going to stay as they are, because they don't seem to very often. It defies the imagination what's going to happen next.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What about this proposed federal gasoline tax surcharge? Would that affect you at all?

HULL: Oh yes. We collect taxes for the government when we sell gas. That would increase the price of gasoline by 25 percent. It would create a bigger supply, automatically — a 20 or 25 percent increase in the price of anything would cause people to think twice before they used it.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Do you think a surtax would be a good move or would it put a crunch on? Would oil companies have to absorb any of that increase?

HULL: The oil companies wouldn't absorb any of that tax, and there's no reason why they should.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So you think people would pay that price?

HULL: They'd have to. We only have so much of a margin in our fuel oil. It has been cut way down, and there's no room for any oil company to absorb these taxes, especially not this one. If we had to absorb it, I'd say, well, the heck with it. That would be the end of it.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Would this hurt your sales significantly?

HULL: Not necessarily, because the people we deal with are in need of 100 percent of their end requirements. They have to get the gasoline they want as long as they're in business. Now, even ourselves, I might say myself, "hey, guys, let's not make so many trips," and maybe cut down there, but you can't really cut that much.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Do you see any possibilities for mass transit in the Berkshires to help ease the problem?

HULL: I don't know that there's that much traffic going back and forth to require a large investment in public transportation. Who's going to fill the buses? I just don't think it would work. Now, in the city of Pittsfield, I could see some general north, south, east and west routes. But, in the rural areas, unless people are willing to pack it up for the day — as they used to do — and take a picnic lunch, it just wouldn't work.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Well, the reason we ask is because you seem so pessimistic about the future of oil.

HULL: Well, I don't think the system is going to fall apart. But the way everything is set up now, it's set up for transportation, and it's so spread out that I doubt you could design a public transportation system to take care of it. It would take 15 years to get everything settled around to where you could use public transportation.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Well, what's the solution?

HULL: If we can create a surplus in money and goods, and in oil in particular, then perhaps the law of supply and demand would come into effect and things would start dropping in price.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: To help solve our energy problem, would you like to see oil rigs off the New England coast?

HULL: Here again, you have to set up a system of values. If we want to maintain our standard of living, I think there's a lot to say for allowing drilling on the continential shelf. So, on balance, I'd be in favor of it. They'd have to show me an awful lot of oil someplace else before I'd say no.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Do you see a time when there will be a surplus in oil and gasoline?

HULL: There is a small surplus now, but worldwide growth is coming up, and who's going to say to some backward nation that they have to stay right where they are? They want to build their countries up, and you can't blame them, and to do that they need oil. So oil demand has been growing at about four or five per cent a year, worldwide. Of course, production is up right now and demand has slipped somewhat because of high prices. But something else comes into play here too. These are depletable reserves, and the Arab countries — This is all they have, cause conceivably, in a hundred years, there will be nothing there but sand. ❦

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ZOLLI: Yes, it's primarily from oil. We are predominantly an oil dependent region of the country — 70 percent of our electricity is produced through oil fired equipment, using number six heavy fuel oil. Right now, because of the environmental laws, it's a low sulphur fuel, 1.5 percent sulphur. The way to get low sulphur fuel is to take higher sulphur oil and blend it with home heating oil, or else you go to a country where it exists naturally.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So most of your oil to produce electricity comes from foreign sources?

ZOLLI: Correct. And, unlike the 15 per cent national dependency on off shore oil that you've heard, New England is 70 percent dependent on off shore sources. But we have converted one third of our capacity to coal. We will follow a plan, if we're allowed to burn coal through variances from the Environmental Protection Agency, that one third of our capacity would be coal, one third would be oil, and one third would alternate back and forth between coal and oil depending on the price. What we want to do is make these things work in a free market to bring the prices down and therefore pass on the lower price to the consumer. We don't want to be locked into one source of fuel. This was the bitter lesson we learned from the fuel crisis.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Is oil a cleaner fuel to burn than coal?

ZOLLI: Yes, because you don't have the particulates. That was part of the reason why, back in the 1960's, we converted many electric plants from coal burning to oil burning. But, at that time, it was also cheaper to burn oil, when the price of coal started to rise and it became good economics to go out and find oil. And our customers were getting the efficiencies that came along with oil, and, up until 1968, utilities had nothing but rate reductions. But, actually, that's a whole different discussion — which is more of a problem, particulates, which you get with coal, or suspended gasses, which you get with oil. One you can see and it's unsightly; the other you can't see but it might be more noxious, more toxic.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So I take it you would encourage a relaxation of air quality controls.

ZOLLI: Well, an act was passed recently in Massachusetts whereby they must include, for the first time since the Environmental Act was enacted, economics in considering their standards. And, what this will do, is allow fuel switching programs, tall stacks, the burning of coal, substitution of fuels, etc., as long as the federal primary air standards are protected. The primary ambient air quality standards are those which protect the public health.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So, not only do you encourage relaxation of state pollution controls, but you expect them to be relaxed?

ZOLLI: I know they will. A case in point was up in North Adams, whereby Sprague Electric was requested by the federal government to put in a monitoring system, and they did, and this is one of the pieces of information that has led to the recent relaxation of air quality standards in Berkshire County from 1.5 percent sulphur to 2.2 per cent sulphur, because of the air in Berkshire County is better than anyplace else in the state.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Do you burn any oil or coal here in Berkshire County to obtain electricity?

ZOLLI: No. All of the Massachusetts Electric Company power that is sold here is purchased through the grid, the New England power pool.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: You mentioned that prices for electricity went down until 1968, and we assume they've gone up since. Where do you expect utility prices to go from here?

ZOLLI: There are two parts to a utility bill. There's the part dependent entirely on fuel, then there's the part which is based on the cost of doing business - administrative, labor, maintenance and other costs. Now, on our bills, we have a separate item for fuel, so that the customer will be able to track the price of fuel. The remainder of the bill is the utility rate, and that has gone up only as much as the rate of inflation over the past year, up about seven percent. The rapid rise has been in the rise of fuel, over which we now have no control.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: At what rate has the cost of fuel gone up?

ZOLLI: Well, we were paying about $3.50 a barrel up until September 1973. When the war broke out in the Middle East and the embargo occurred, the cost of fuel rose to about $12 or $13 per barrel before it settled out at about $11 or $12 per barrel. There was one load of fuel, during the height of the crisis, that we bought for $23.75 a barrel, because we simply had nothing in the tanks and there was no freighter on the horizon. So it was that or blackout, and we just couldn't do that.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So what does this mean to the consumer? Has the fuel part of the bill tripled, while the administrative part of the bill has gone up about seven percent — all in one year?

ZOLLI: The bill, as a whole, has increased 40 to 60 percent. The fuel part has gone up 350 percent.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What do you expect in the next year?

ZOLLI: Let's look at that from two aspects. One, on the supply side. Because of the relaxation in the embargo and the conservative habits developed over the last several months, we have been able to see a stockpiling in the amount of oil coming into the country. In other words, they're presently producing it in the Middle East and elsewhere faster than we can use it. So our reserves are up. We're also seeing supplies of coal sitting on the ground as a reserve. This, I think, will allow us to say that, unless there is a severe problem like the one we had last winter, we should have no problem with supply. People will not be blacked out. However, from the price side, yes those fuels are available but because of the impending coal strike that looms on the horizon in November, you've seen no reduction in prices of either oil or coal. This is manifested at the gasoline pump, although you've maybe seen a penny or two difference. The price of gasoline will not go back and neither will the price of oil.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So, certainly the price of electricity will not go down?

ZOLLI: Correct. But, we're saying, again we have to look at it in parts, the rate will probably not go down because until President Ford comes up with the plan that brings it under control, inflation is with us. The price of fuel, if we're able to get the coal burning variances, if we are able to get the high sulphur variances, will demonstrate an immediate pass-through to the customer a lower cost of fuel. Now, what that will be, to what extent, I don't know.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So six months from now it is possible that electric prices will be down slightly?

ZOLLI: It's possible. It's possible, if we're lucky enough.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: You mean, if there's no embargo, no strike, etc.? But if these things do happen, is it possible that people will be going cold this winter?

ZOLLI: I think that the probability of black outs or brown outs this winter, due to not having enough fuel on hand, is quite slight, I think we'll get through it. What is necessary, though, is conservation.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Some people — Commissioner Sawhill among them — say that New England, and Berkshire County as a part of New England, uses an awful lot of power, and that this area should make a commitment to produce some of its own energy, which it does not now do. Could you comment on this?

ZOLLI: We do use a disproportionate amount of energy, that's true, but it's not our fault. We didn't design it that way. I think it would be wise, however, to alleviate our dependency on foreign oil, no matter how we come to do that. Oil and gas do exist on the continential shelf. I think it would be wise to use this and reduce our dependency on foreign governments for the simple reason that they are not something you can depend on. I also think we have to make a very firm commitment to nuclear power. That is the only way, in the intermediate term, that we're going to reduce our energy dependency on fossil fuels.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Is that now a siginficant part of the energy picture?

ZOLLI: It now provides about 20 percent of our capacity in New England. By the mid 1980's there will probably be nine new nuclear power plants on the line, and the total will be about 50 to 55 percent of our energy capacity. And the amount of electricity being used in New England is growing at about the rate of five percent a year, so it will be about half of that new, larger total.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What about hydroelectric power. That is the cleanest way to generate electricity, isn't it?

ZOLLI: Sure. But it's small and growing at a small rate, because most of the streams in New England have been used up. We have dams everyplace where you can put a dam with any kind of cost efficiency. Hydroelectric power runs about four to five percent of our capacity.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: You can't store electricity, can you?

ZOLLI: No. And, what happens during the winter, is that everyone uses the most electricity during the period from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. This is when you come home, turn on the lights, kick up the thermostat, put on the TV and start cooking dinner.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So you think conservation on the consumer's part is worthwhile?

ZOLLI: Oh, yes. It worked in excess of five percent last winter. However, I think there's a problem here in that the longer period of time you go using conservative techniques, the less likely that one is able to call upon them in a crisis. You can't say cut some more when they've already cut to the bone. I don't think we can rely on that as a major contributor. Also, you might like to know, that during the daylight saving time, which we all thought would be of assistance, we were able to cut something less than one percent. And voltage reductions only amounted to another one-half percent. So, you see, there's not an awful lot of leeway in manipulative operations. What we're going to have to do is develop plans for building up our reserves of energy, of oil and coal, so that if we ever do get into a political bind, we can tide ourselves over until the crisis breaks.

BEKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So where do you see electricity as an energy source in the future?

ZOLLI: Our all-abiding principle is that everyone is going to have electricity. It is without peer as an environmental energy tool. We want people to enjoy it and use it wisely.

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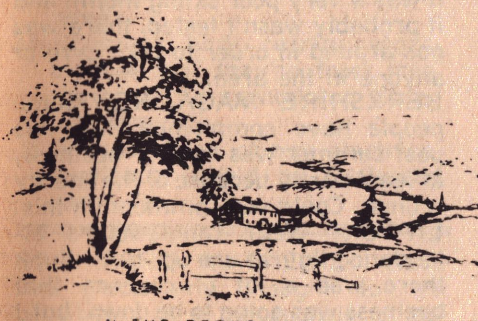

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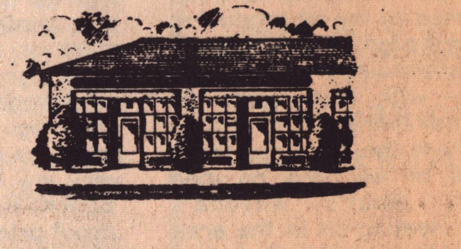

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the year being used by the Federal Energy Administration to assure supplies to the distributor.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: But, for example, last winter —

LIPTON: Last winter we had plenty of oil throughout the winter.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Full allocations?

LIPTON: We didn't have our full allocations, but we had a significant drop in degree days as well as a successful conservation program, especially in Berkshire County. Between the two, less degree days and conservation, there was roughly a 19 to 22 percent savings in the consumption of heating oil.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What do you expect to happen this winter as far as gas and heating oil go?

LIPTON: First of all, in terms of shortages, we feel a lot more secure for this particular winter since the inventories on hand now are record inventories. There has been no other time in history when the tanks of New England have been as full as they are at this point. And, if there were to be a cutback, such as another oil embargo, I would say that our chances of living with the situation, even in a winter a little more severe than the one we've just experienced, would be much better than they would have been if last winter had been severe. In spite of the embargo, the domestic production was increased; the country under the conservation program worked it out quite well. And, without any question at all, conservation measures are going to have to continue. The fact remains that we are one of the most gluttonous nations as far as fuel in the world, and until we learn how to use it more economically, to adjust to the ever increasing inflationary costs of fuel in the world, we're going to have to have conservation measures. And, we feel right now, in light of these very heavy inventories, in light of the fact that to this date production levels have not been decreased by the oil producing nations — their production levels are still being maintained at a pretty high rate — with these facts we would say that there will be ample supplies. Where the prices of these supplies will be we have no idea whatsoever. That's anyone's speculation. Heating oil in the area is currently selling at 38 to 39 cents a gallon, depending on the source of supply.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: This is what the homeowner pays? Up from about what, say a year and a half ago?

LIPTON: Right. Up from about — a year and half ago oil was selling from roughly 23 to 24 cents a gallon. And, as you know, the world price for a crude barrel of oil has increased very substantially, and this has caused a tremendous burden on the end user of fuel oil.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So you expect plenty of heating oil this winter, anyway?

LIPTON: We expect that oil will be in good supply.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: And gasoline as well?

LIPTON: At this point there is dialogue that there may be a production cutback with gasoline because there is so much gasoline available. We ourselves are experiencing more gasoline now than we have ever experienced before. Our allocation for the month of September was 115 per cent of the gas that we purchased in the base period. Just this morning I noticed in a trade journal that gasoline consumption is down substantially, so with the higher prices per gallon for gasoline, consumers are traveling less.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Now this 115 percent figure, how does this compare with last winter?

LIPTON: The lowest allocation that we were under in gas was 85 percent. So it wasn't as drastic as some of the other companies experienced. I believe it was back in February, our worst month. However, with fuel oil we were down lower but managed to survive only because of the very effective measures that our customers took in conserving product. But heating oil for the last five months has been on 100 percent allocation. We were as low, back in October and November, as low as 68 percent. That was raised to about 85 percent in December and January, and in April, I think it was, it went back to 100 percent allocation.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Do you expect it to be 100 percent allocation this winter?

LIPTON: All indications, in talking with our suppliers, are that fuel will be maintained at the 100 percent mark or as close as possible. The word right now, in the east, is that all storage tanks are full, whereas a year ago at this time, in pre-embargo days, the tanks were at a very low level.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What about prices? Do you expect them to go still higher?

LIPTON: Well, gasoline prices have come down. In the past couple of months gas prices have been on the decline. Only a few cents per gallon, but that's very significant. Fuel oil prices, on the other hand - we can't make any predictions there. I would say that the average person in the street, from reading the papers, can make as much of a judgment as we can, because there are so many factors involved.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Are you soliciting new business?

LIPTON: In order to be a participant in the free enterprise system, we are constantly looking for new accounts, with the idea that we have sufficient supplies to take care of them.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: So someone building or buying in the area does not have to worry about getting heat?

LIPTON: No. He's going to be taken care of.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: But they should expect to pay for it?

LIPTON: Certainly. Approximately two years ago, to the best of our knowledge an average six room home — and there really isn't any average — consumed roughly 1700 gallons of oil, and if that was selling at about 20 cents a gallon you're talking roughtly $350. Today, that same 1700 gallons is closer to 39 cents a gallon, so all you have to do is multiply it and see there's a significant increase. However, oil is still, in most areas of New England, the most economical fuel to heat your home with. And it has been a favorite in New England because you have your supply in the basement tank.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Will gasoline also be in plentiful supply this winter? Will skiers have to worry that they can't get home?

LIPTON: I think that the local administrations will see that, if there is a crisis, there will be significant allocations given to areas that will be affected by a drop in the tourist trade. It never really came about last winter. I think the tightest month was February, and, although it was a very poor skiing month and it probably wasn't tested, there was gas around in order to take care of anyone in the area.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Some people have complained that this past summer was bad for business, at least partly because of the energy crunch. Could you comment on this.

LIPTON: Well, Tanglewood's attendance figures are up. But I think there was a lot of concern that business was going to be down, but I think that other things are contributing to it in addition to the energy crisis. But I think there's probably been a decrease in the amount of people eating dinner out, for example, and this is a result of people using fuel more economically.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What do we do to get more oil? Would you like to see oil rigs in Long Island Sound, for example?

LIPTON: I feel without any question at all that New England must take those measures that are going to guarantee that there's oil, and if these developments lead to offshore drilling, lead to refineries in New England, I think those steps have to be taken. The environmental concern is going to have to give way at this time to some more basic needs.

15 TIPS TO SAVE ENERGY IN THE HOME

1. most importantly see that your house is fully insulated.
2. Use weather stripping around doors and windows.
3. Use storm windows ; they will pay for themselves in one or two seasons.
4. Close fireplace: dampers when not in use.
5. Close outside doors immediately.
6. Don't open windows if the heat is on.
7. Don't block radiators or registers with rugs or furniture.
8. Lower your thermostat at night or when going away for more than 24 hours.
9. Turn leaky faucets off; you can lose up to 700 gallons of hot water a year from a leaky faucet.
10. Use dishwashers and clothes washers only when you have a full load.
11. Set the thermostat to the hot water heater to no more than 140 degrees.
12. Turn off lights when you're not there; if you leave a light bulb on overnight it will cost you from 3 to 6 cents.
13. Be especially careful with second homes; where leaving a light bulb on may not just be for overnight but for three or four weeks.
14. Freezers and refrigerators, especially if they're frost free, should not be opened and closed too frequently
15. The purchase of any electrical appliance should be evaluated carefully.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Have you given any thought to the possibility of mass transit in the Berkshires to help alleviate individual dependency on the car?

LIPTON: No question about it. I think we have to develop mass transit in every metropolitan area to reduce our dependency on the automobile. I think we're going to have to exercise car pools. We're going to have to do everything necessary to reduce the amount of driving that we do.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: And train service?

LIPTON: I think we've already seen some resurgence of that now. I believe Pittsfield was one of the cities to be included in the reinstated New York to Montreal train. I think there's a great amount of potential here that should be maximized to eliminate a lot of unnecessary driving.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: How do the Berkshires stand compared to other areas of the Northeast as far as supply goes?

LIPTON: Well, I have never, in 15 years, been without fuel. The port at Albany has never been dry. Even six or seven years ago when the Hudson froze and barges could not get up the river, we had plenty of oil. The lines of supply to the Berkshires are perfectly adequate. Also, several local dealers have not been making plans for better storage facilities.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: Can you say anything about what the winters of 1976 or 1977 will be like?

LIPTON: You can only speculate as far as the winters go. We have seen three mild winters, and there has been a change in the Berkshires towards milder winters. Traditionally, for example, we've had colder winters than Albany, but the last two winters have seen the Berkshires up to 10 degrees warmer than Albany. We record the daily weather on a computer to anticipate our customers' needs, and we've seen a decline in degree days. This, coupled with very successful conservation measures, has resulted in a decline in the gallonage the consumer has used. But we also put new heaters in new homes, and have converted some others, so total oil consumption is still being increased.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: What about the supplies over the next couple of years?

LIPTON: How can anyone speculate? But I do believe we will reduce the dependence that we have on foreign countries. I believe we will use oil in the best and most efficient ways and provide as much oil production as possible within the country.

BERKSHIRE MAGAZINE: You sound pretty optimistic as far as supplies go.

LIPTON: I'm very optimistic about the future of oil in New England. I'm hoping at the same time that our research and development will keep abreast of other forms of energy so as not to penalize oil. At a recent conference in Montreal we listened to experts in our industry project that not only our children but our grandchildren will enjoy good business with oil.

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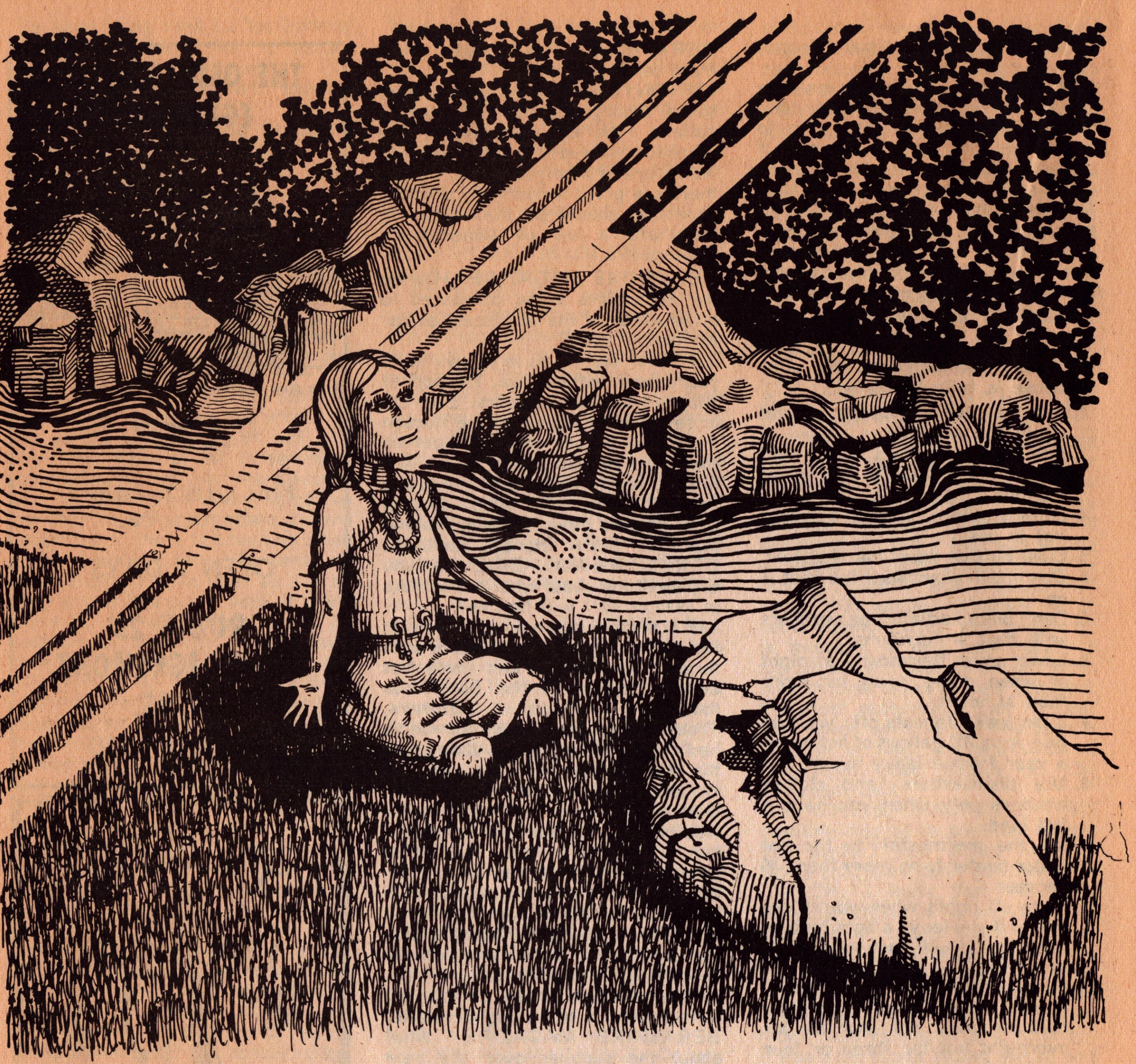


Legends of the Berkshires

by
Terry Flynn

The Mohican Indians of Berkshire County held an interesting belief concerning the Big Dipper. When a young Mohican brave gazed at the sky on a clear autumn night, he saw a heroic but tragic drama unfold; a drama in which Paukaunnawaw (The Bear) — since springtime the object of a relentless hunt across the heavens — finally spills his blood over the forests, painting the trees in the beautiful hues of fall, a last act of glory before fading and falling to the cold death of winter.

Now, it is said that while under the influence of the wounded Paukaunnawaw, the world is subject to an aura of mystery as well as beauty. Experiencing the paradox of great beauty in the process of death, it hovers between reality and illusion; between mortality and immortality, between the known and the unknown. At such time, the world is ripe for tales of legendary devotion, supernatural strength and simply events that defy rational explanation.

Through the years many tales have grown up around the local landmarks all over Berkshire county.

One of the most well-known legends involves the fascinating waterfalls on Mount Washington. In an Indian village near the falls lived a beautiful woman by the name of Bash Bish. She was a cheerful sister to all in her village and also the mother of a fair infant girl named White Swan. One day Bash Bish was accused of adultery, by dint of what evil forces it is unknown. She went before the village council to plead her innocence, but the stern old leaders, calling her liar and adulteress, sentenced her to death.

The execution was to be accomplished by strapping the condemned woman to a canoe and turning it loose a few hundred feet upstream from the great falls.

At the appointed hour, the Indians assembled above the falls and prepared to fasten the trembling woman to the canoe, when, all of a sudden, the rays of the sun filtered over her body and a circle of bright butterflies ringed her head. Her executioners stood back aghast at this strange phenomenon and bewildered by the peaceful look now covering Bash Bish's face. Skimming over the water, the haloed figure fled to the edge of the falls, and, briefly pausing to give a final smile to little White Swan who was crying quietly in the arms of an old squaw, she surrendered herself to the raging water.

Though they searched throughout the day, the Indians could find no trace of Bash Bish's body. With the chill of nightfall, the suspicion that they had been in the presence of a witch crept into the people's minds, and for sometime, the memory of the eerie happenings at the falls haunted them in their sleep.

But time eases such situations and twenty years after the terrifying plunge of Bash Bish, the people of the village again enjoyed a normal, peaceful life. Only White Swan remained troubled by the past. She would often climb to the great rock above the falls and seek direction from the rippling waters. By some standards she had lived a happy life: enjoying great beauty and good health, she had married Chief Black Thunder's son, Whirling Wind. But, although the young couple got along well together, White Swan lived, as she always had, with an unexplainable and incessant pang of loneliness. To complicate matters she proved unable to give children to Whirling Wind, a fact which caused him to take another wife and which convinced White Swan that more than ever she was an alien among her own people — detached from the past by the parting of her mother and from the future by her barren womb.

One day, feeling extremely lost and empty, White Swan went up to her favorite rock. Unaware of the presence of Whirling Wind who had followed her up the mountain, she stood and gazed searchingly at the falls. Suddenly, before the eyes but beyond the reach of an anguished Whirling Wind, the frenzied young beauty flew across the swirling waters and hurled herself over the crashing falls. In a state of shock and despair, Whirling Wind picked his way along the rocky shore, 'till he reached the edge of the falls, and with a shriek full of outrage and suffering, he followed his first love to the bottom of the cascade.

Once again, the Indian people searched the pool beneath the great falls, and at the very edge, they found the smashed and broken body of Whirling Wind.

As for White Swan her body was never found, for she was spirit now, at one with her beautiful mother Bash Bish — at one with the great falls which alone had brought her peace and salvation from an unjust world. And it is said that the image of Bash Bish and White Swan appear in the falls and in the pool below on moonlit nights.

William Cullen Bryant tells a variation of the following legend in his famous poem "Monument Mountain". When a beautiful young Stockbridge girl strayed from the traditions of her people by marrying a brave from another tribe, she was sentenced to death. With many people watching from below she was tied up and thrown off what is now the famous Squaw's Peak of Monument Mountain. She did not plunge to her death, however, for a pine tree on the side of the mountain caught her in mid-descent. There she hung screaming and struggling to free herself of her bonds.

The people below squirmed and shifted with guilt for a full day until the angered spirits of the mountain finally put an end to the agonizing situation. Lightning flashed and the whole valley rumbled with thunder as a chariot of flame swooped down from the clouds, embraced the now exhausted girl and carried her upward to an immortal sanctuary. And Bryant wrote in 1824, ". . . the tribe built up a simple monument, a cone of small loose stones. Thenceforward all who passed, hunter, and dame, and virgin, laid a stone in silence on the pile. It stands there yet."

A similar situation resulted in a more tragic ending in Stockbridge when the father and the betrothed of the Muhhekanew maiden, Keneanceequa, caught her in the arms of her Algonquin lover, Ossowaun, on top of Monument Mountain. As the two Muhhekanew tried to drag the girl back to her tribe, she broke away and fled to the top of Squaw's Peak where, despairing of ever seeing her lover again, she jumped to her death.

The frantic Algonquin rushed back to his people's lodges on the shores of Stockbridge Bowl known to the Indians as Mahkeenac, "Water of the Moon" where he prepared them for an attack by the outraged Muhhekanew. That very night it came with disastrous results, as all of Ossowaun's people but his father, Chief Sheneweenaw, fell to the knives and arrows of the assailants. Ossowaun fought bravely, dying at the hand of Keneanceequa's father when he refused to strike.

After a day of mourning Sheneweenaw placed his son's body in the bottom of a canoe, and piercing it with a hatchet, he set it adrift on Mahkeenac where it gradually sank from sight. To this day many people believe the spirit of Ossowaun resides in the lake. There the anguish and anger of his life on earth show themselves in the rough waters of daylight, and the tranquil sleep brought to him by death can be seen at night in the glass-like beauty of the lake so true to its name.

Still another Indian love story involves a small Mohican village on the shores of Pontoosuc Lake, in present day Pittsfield. When two cousins Moonkeek and Shoonkeek fell in love, a great commotion was raised by jealous suitors and by strict older tribal leaders. A decision was made around the council fires which invoked a tribal tradition against intermarriage between cousins, and they forbade the two lovers from ever seeing each other again.

Hearing of this decision, Shoonkeek and Moonkeek decided to meet that very night, on an island in the middle of the lake and from there to flee to another tribe where they could live happily together. They vowed never to let anything separate them again.

Moonkeek reached the island first and awaited the arrival of her beloved. As time went on she became anxious and an uneasy feeling moved through her body. Suddenly, she saw a shadowy Shoonkeek approaching in his canoe. She called to him, but his answer came not from the vessel passing in front of her, but rather from the very depths of the lake — on his way to the island, Shoonkeek had been killed by the arrow of a jealous lover.

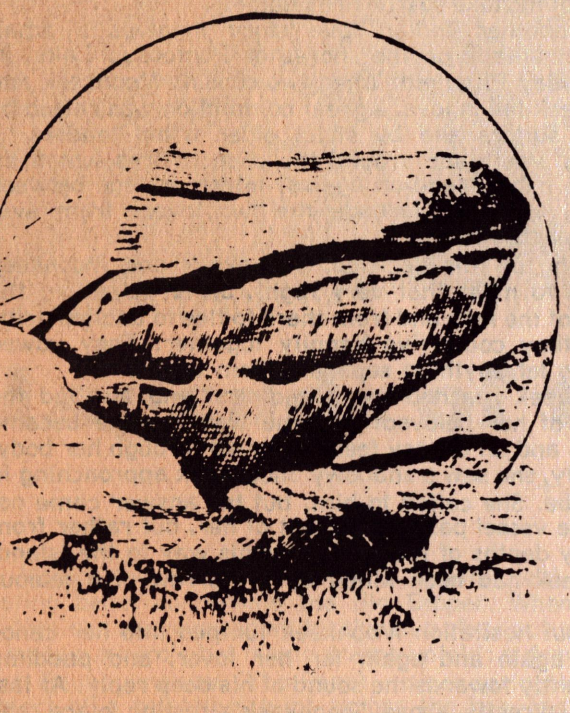
Without hesitation Moonkeek jumped into her canoe calling again and again for her lover, and paddling persistently towards the sound of his deep reply. At last floating directly above Shoonkeek's resting place, she slipped into the water and was quickly nestled in the arms of her love, never to be parted from him again.

Now the redman was not always on the bad side of the spiritual world, and indeed, the basically harmonious relationship which the Indian sought to maintain with the world of spirit was enhanced every now and then by the appearance of a being from the other world.

It seems that one day on a rocky plot of land just north of Pittsfield, some young Mohicans were busy playing the game of "duff." The object of this game was to dislodge one stone from atop another stone by throwing a third stone at it. During the course of the contest one of the boys noticed that a slender young red man was leaning against a tree watching the game. The scrawny youth was quickly the focus of all the boys' attention and before long they rudely challenged him to a trial of strength, laughing smugly at the thought of such a weak lad actually trying to compete with them in a game of duff.

To their surprise, the slender youth took up their challenge, and began searching for a heavy rock to throw. As he wandered about the field, the skinny figure grew to giant proportions before the incredulous eyes of the young duff players. Soon the boys realized that this now enormous man could only be the Iroquois Emperor Atotarho. They stood in awe as he began hurling huge rocks and boulders about in a Garguantuan game of duff, capping the phenomenal display of strength by seizing the largest boulder in sight and sending it spiralling through the air as if it were a giant football. To the amazement of all, the great rock landed gently on a small fulcrum point, and on this point it has balanced to this very day. Even now you can see balanced rock, weathered with age but still of giant proportions, in the present town of Lanesboro.

Atotarho resumed his slender shape and after giving a brief lecture to the young Indians concerning the mannerly treatment of one's fellow man, he melted away into the woods.



Balance Rock, Lanesboro

Before the Europeans entered Berkshire County, the Mohicans in Pontoosuc, later Pittsfield, often spotted a snow-white deer drinking from the cool waters of Onota Lake. No Indian was ever allowed to harm this beautiful, sensitive animal for she was regarded as a gentle embodiment of the pure and abundant life of nature. Her presence at the lake ensured ample harvest in the fall, good hunting throughout the coming year, and in general, a life of plenty for the people of the valley.

For years this sacred animal remained unharmed, and life remained plentiful for the Indian people. Then, one day, a French officer named Montalbert came through the Berkshires on a journey to persuade the Indians of New England to war against the British colonies. Hearing the story of the White Deer of Onota, Montalbert's thoughts turned to villainy and greed, for a skin of such rarity and beauty would surely be of great value in Europe. No doubt the French King would lavishly reward the bestower of such a gift.

With these thoughts in mind Montalbert took advantage of a red man's thirst for firewater, and persuaded him to lead him to the spot where the White Deer came to water. The Frenchman had been watching for only two days when to his great excitement the gentle doe appeared at the edge of the lake. So used to an unmolested life among the Indians, the white beauty stood proud and tall gazing calmly out over the lake, and there she fell, the unsuspecting victim of a European musketball.

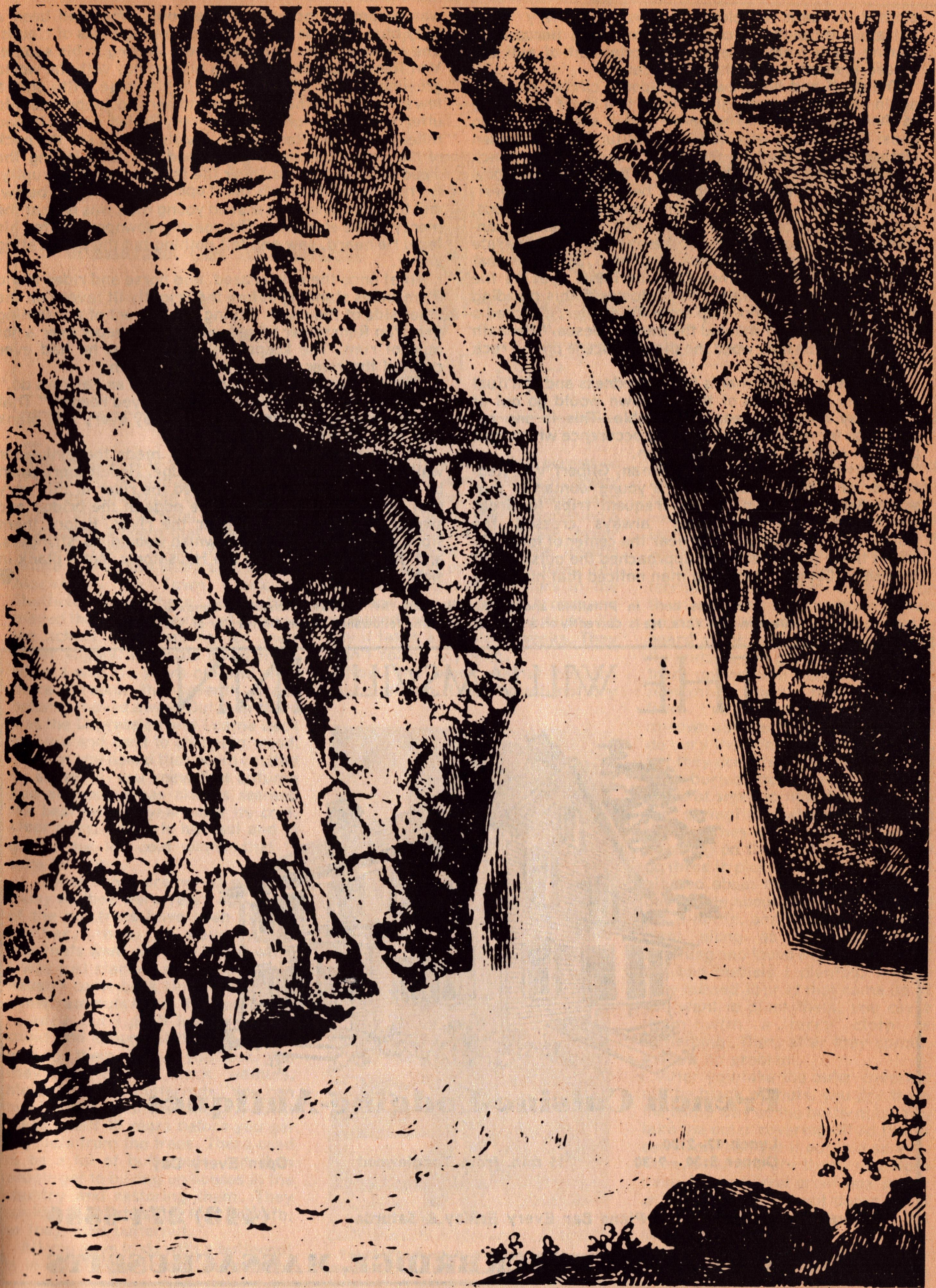
Montalbert rushed towards Canada with the prized hide. Weeks went by, months went by, but no trace of either him or the sacred skin was ever found. They were lost to both the red man and the white man.

As for the Indian people around the lake, they begged the Great Spirit for forgiveness; but their supplications were all in vain for the gentle care of the white deer had gone from the valley forever. The Mohican people were never to know prosperity again, and what had once been a proud and happy tribe was soon disintegrated.

The stories of spirits in Berkshire County are basically the legacy of the Indians, but the white man was at times quite as capable as the Indian of being affected by a world other than his own.

In the mountains of Dalton, there is a deep gorge long known as the Wizard's Glen. Late in the eighteenth century a resident of Ashuelot (now Dalton) named John Chamberlain had the apparent good fortune of slaying a deer at the close of day somewhere within the Wizard's Glen. As he was dressing the deer, a thunderous hailstorm erupted, and the hunter was forced to seek shelter for himself and his kill under one of the many overhanging rocks in the glen.

The final traces of sunlight disappeared but the fury of the storm precluded sleep for the uneasy woodsman; and gazing out from his stone shelter a chill shot through his body as the flashing lightning revealed before him the great flat rock known to all in the area as the Devil's altar stone. Spurred by a howling wind, the storm raged on. Suddenly Chamberlain saw on the stone before him what could only be the devil himself. Incessant flashes of lightning revealed a parade of wizardly Indian phantoms mounting the altar stone to pay homage to this red devil, Hobomoko. These phantoms were led by a high priest whom Chamberlain would later describe as the ugliest sight he had ever seen. And, with his head covered by hair of blue flame and his body



Bash Bish Falls, Mount Washington

clothed in belts of bloody scalps, with fiery veins pulsating through his coppery skin and a fierce light glaring forth from his eyes, this celebrant of evil did indeed present a most horrible scene.

The devil and his crew of evil-doers circled the rock again and again lurchingly dancing to a chant as ghastly as their appearance. The dance ended abruptly as two ghost-like figures escorted a beautiful Indian maiden clothed only in the long tresses of her own shiny black hair, up to the horrid altar stone. The red demons now pushed the frightened young girl before the high priest who immediately began circling the girl in a furious, screaming dance. As he raised his hatchet to consummate this horrible ritual, the eyes of the desparate maiden darted all about in search of help. By some great stroke of fortune, she met Chamberlain's eyes as the hatchet was about to fall. Unable to resist this pleading stare, the hunter jumped up from his shelter, clutched a well-worn bible and shouted the name, "Jesus," Beneath the force of this holy word the diabolic scene on the rock vanished, girl and all.

Perhaps drawn by man's basic goodness and spiritual sensitivity, the forces of the unknown would go out of their way to aid someone in trouble. This is one explanation for an otherwise baffling occurence which took place in colonial Great Barrington.

It seems that a certain Dutchman, Gilbert Van Rensselaer of Albany, was wooing a young woman in that south Berkshire town. In his frequent trips to Great Barrington, Van Rensselaer always crossed the Housatonic at the long bridge near the center of town. On one of these journeys, as he approached the outskirts of Berkshire County, the young man noticed that his horse was becoming increasingly nervous. What had been a hazy blue sky was now a dark engulfing mass of clouds. The air had grown still and quiet. Shifting in his saddle, Van Rensselaer continued on his journey with the world growing darker with each step of his horse. With only a few miles left to the trip man and horse disappeared into utter darkness-night had not only fallen early, it had fallen hard. Van Rensselaer, barely able to see the neck of his mount before him, dropped the reins letting the steed pick his own way over the familiar road. Abruptly, the now invisible clouds burst open, drenching all below, and the frightened and soaked young man was now at the mercy of the elements. The roaring downpour pelted his face. He heard, saw and felt nothing but the penetrating water.

All at once the rain ceased, and horse and rider found themselves standing before the brightly-lit tavern on the other side of the river. Drying out in front of a warming fire, Van Rensselaer talked with the innkeeper over a hot mug of rum. The keeper asked him how he had ever crossed the river in such a raging storm.

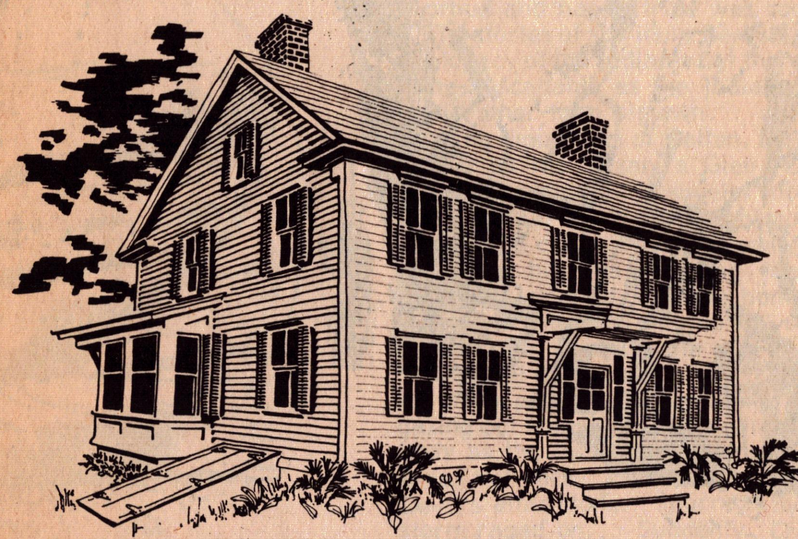
"Why, I crossed at the long bridge just as I always do."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the wide-eyed keeper," That bridge is under repair, and only today every last plank was torn up from its floor."

An incredulous Van Rensselaer made the innkeeper walk out with him to view the bridge. He felt there must be a floor for he had just crossed the river at this very spot. The two men reached the edge of the bridge and swung their lanterns out over the river. Before them stood a great structure of brownish wood-piles, stringers, and the rushing waters of the Housatonic; not a plank in sight. ❦

Terry Flynn was born in Pittsfield and graduated from the Cranwell School in Lenox and Siena College in New York. He is currently on a graduate teaching fellowship at the University of Vermont.

THE WILLIAMSVILLE INN



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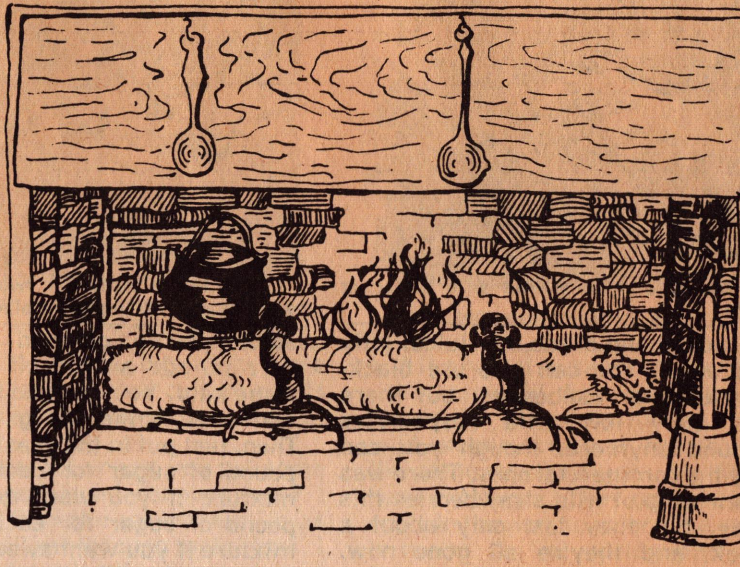
COUNTRY FARE

Of Butternuts, Cider and Sauerkraut

by

Floyd Woodbeck



"The goldenrod is yellow
The corn is turning brown,
The trees and apple orchards
With fruit are bending down. . ."

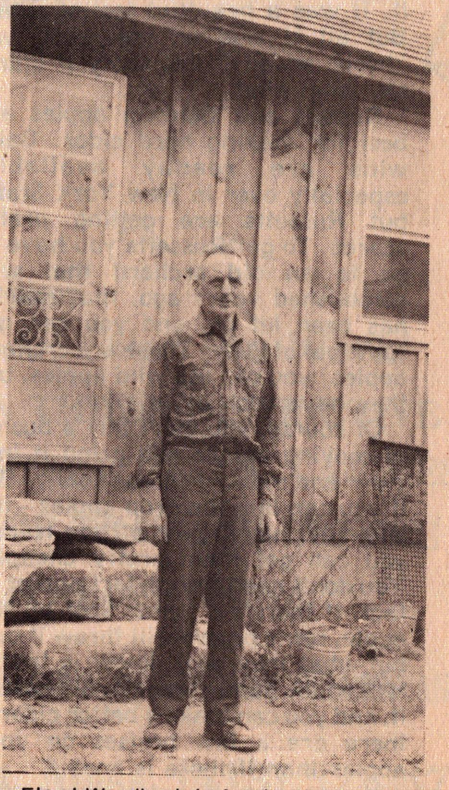
So began a poem that I learned in the one room Brush Hill School House in Sheffield years ago. Minnie Markham, the Town Clerk of Sheffield lives there now; they moved the house slightly but still use the school house spring for their water supply. I started going there when I was six years old and went there through the seventh grade before I moved away. But then there was the Depression and I came back up here and went to chopping wood.

When you heard that poem recited by someone, you knew that autumn had arrived. It has always seemed the best time of year with its cool, clear days, a time to harvest and to gather for the cold winter that is sure to follow.

Some things are not as plentiful today as they were years ago. A lot of the nut trees have been cut for lumber; then, of course, the chestnuts went with the blight when I was just starting school, and they haven't come back since. There are a few hazelnuts left in this part of the country, but I don't know that you could find enough of them to pay to look for them. But, if you look, you may find a few black walnuts, hickory nuts or butternuts. You can buy butternuts at the nursery, but it takes about 10 years before you get any nuts from the trees. There used to be a lot of butternuts, but then people got to buying up houses in the country and restoring them. They could not get chestnut to trim with, so they used butternut.

All you have to do with a butternut is to lay it on a screen somewhere and cover it with another screen so the squirrels won't get to it. Many butternuts have been stung, and they are no good - that's happening a lot now because there are fewer trees, so there are more insects concentrating on the one tree. You dry the butternuts outdoors in the sun, and they will get all brown and withered looking on the outside. I'd say it takes a couple of weeks. They won't rot or anything.

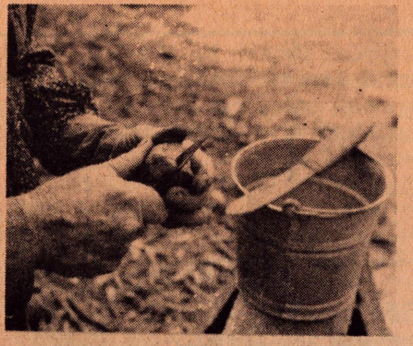
Now, the black walnut has too much pith on it, and it will not dry down by itself. The squirrels take it and knaw the pith off, but you can take it off with a knife. Otherwise - well, a friend of mine gathered them last year, stuck them in a box, and a week later he called me in and said, "These nuts are rotten; they smell terrible." The outer covering on them was rotten. When the squirrels go to bury the nuts - you've probably heard of the gray squirrels burying the nuts in the ground and digging them up the next year - they don't remember where they've buried them. I've proved that to myself, to my own satisfaction. Of course, they do bury them in their own territory, but they don't remember just where they buried them. They use their sense of smell to find them again in the springtime when the ground thaws. They can smell this outer covering on the nut rotting, so they go there to pick them up. One time I planted about two bushels of them, dug a hole about every two feet and put a nut in, and the squirrels went right along as methodically as anything and found every one. Out of the two bushels I planted, I think they missed 10 or 12 that came up. If you want to plant them, you cover them with a terry cloth or something. Then, after they sprout, there's no problem.



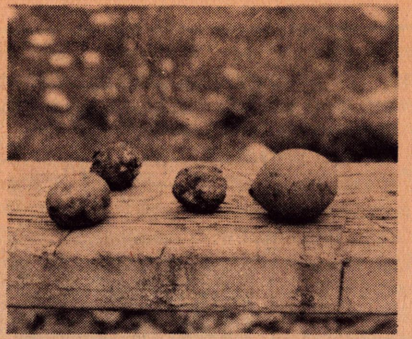
Floyd Woodbeck in front of his Sheffield home which he built himself.

After you take the outer covering off the black walnuts, you dry them the same way as the butternuts. You take the outer covering off so that it can't rot, then put it out in a screen. Then, after you dry them, you store them in a squirrel-proof box inside an attic, where it's not damp. So if you have a damp cellar, don't put them down there.

Wild grapes and elderberries are pretty plentiful around here and can



Peeling a black walnut with a pocket knife.



From left, a butternut, two peeled black walnuts and an unpeeled black walnut.

A butternut tree sillouetted against the sky.

be picked and made into juice, jelly and wine. You can also use blackberries and raspberries, but there are very few wild raspberries around anymore, though you can buy the commercial ones. There was a fair crop of wild strawberries this year, but they last only about a week, and they're all gone now. There are some wild blackberries, but nothing to what there used to be when I was a kid. At that time they were cutting off lots of timber jobs in this part of the country and, as soon as they cut a timber job off, the berry bushes would all spring up and you could pick them by the bushel. But there seems to be a disease of some sort that has killed off most all the wild raspberries and a lot of the wild blackberries. It's some sort of blight or something, but I don't know just what it is.

A good, dry wine can be made by mixing two parts wild grape juice with three parts sweet cider and adding 1/ 2 pound of sugar for each gallon of mixture. You can cheat and use commercial grape juice, but you won't get the same flavor. If you're going to do that, you might as well go ahead and make a regular concord grape wine; you wouldn't have to put the cider in. But the wild grape contains quite a bit of tannic acid - the stuff that makes your mouth pucker. All those wild fruits have it for protection so that things don't eat so many of them. Let this mixture ferment for 10 days in a warm place. Now strain the wine and put it in a white oak keg to age for two months. It will make you laugh and sing.

Elderberry wine used to be accepted by the Methodist Church. A Methodist minister could drink elderberry wine if he went someplace, and that was considered a medical drink. He couldn't drink anything else, but elderberry wine was all right. To make an elderberry wine, first pick the elderberries all off the stems; don't put any stems in because they make it bitter. Then you crush them and you can add other things to improve the flavor - you can get some wild black cherries and crush a few of those in there. After you've crushed the elderberries, add a little bit of juice of some kind. You can add some of the white commercial grape juice. Then, just put in the yeast and a half pound of sugar for each gallon of mixture if you want dry wine, a pound of sugar for each gallon of mixture if you want sweet wine. Let it ferment with the berries and anything else you put in until it stops bubbling - until the bubbles are all gone at the top - then strain it off and put it in a wooden keg. Never put any kind of wine in a metal container. It may eat off some of the metal and make the wine poisonous. I knew a man several years ago who got an old milk can, got some grapes, and made up a milk can full of wine. By the time he got that wine pretty well drunk up he died.

You can add things to wine pretty much to your own taste. Some people put in spices and herbs. I recently drank some very good imported Port wine that had herbs in it. It was a beautiful tasting wine. But all it said on the label was "herbs added;" I'm sorry it didn't say what kind.

Russett and Baldwin apples are best for making hard cider. Baldwins are readily available, especially over in New York State, but Russetts are getting pretty scarce. To get Russetts you have to go to an old orchard that was established years ago, that maybe has been let go, and you can get some out of there. These are orchard apples; you can use wild apples, but they have such a variation.

Of course, you can't buy a bushel of cooking apples and grind it into cider and make it economically. But if you can buy the drop apples - the ones that have fallen off the trees - you can get them pretty cheaply. You don't need the perfect apple; in fact, if there's a rotten spot on the apple, some people will throw it out, but what they don't know is that a spot on the apple has natural yeast in it, and you can make a better cider if there are a few bruises on your apples than if there is none.

You take your apples right to the mill. I take mine to Hewins' cider mill in Sheffield, and he presses the cider out for me from the apples I bring him. Now, if you take apples to some mills, they'll weigh up your apples, set them to one side and take the first apples that come along and grind that much cider for you. You get the same amount of cider, but it may be out of MacIntosh apples or something like that, and your cider won't be of the same quality.

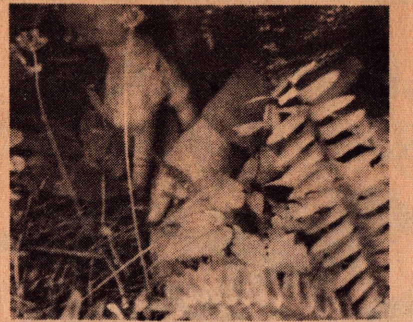
To press the cider out yourself, you have to get a small mill, and the thing I've found about the small mills is that they waste at least half the cider. And don't try pressing the apples with a wine press, because, again, you'll get only about half the juice out of the apples.

Put the sweet cider from your apples in a whiskey barrel. You can use any oak barrel, but a whiskey barrel has been treated so that it helps the cider. It's been charred on the inside. Whiskey barrels are available; right now I think they cost about $25 apiece for a 50 gallon barrel. And, if you're going to the trouble to make your own cider, with your own apples, you want to make it the best by getting a whiskey barrel. And, believe me, everybody swears that my cider is the best they've ever drank. I couldn't make it last year because there were no apples, but this year I think there are going to be good apples.

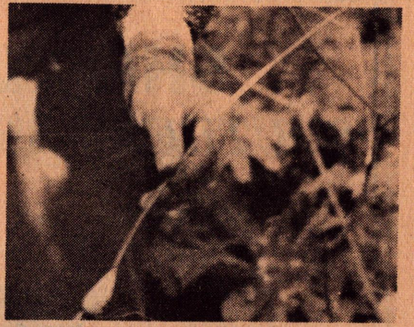
After putting the cider in the barrel, add some white sugar each week until you've added about two pounds of sugar to every five gallons of cider. Store in a cool place like a root cellar, where it will not freeze but will work slowly.

Here's just a note about getting those apple trees back into shape. If you prune the tree when it is dormant, it will promote growth. If you prune it when it is growing, it will retard growth a little bit. So, if the tree has too many sprouts on it, then you prune in the summertime; it will retard the growth of the sprouts and improve the tree. But if the tree is ailing and isn't putting out much growth, then you prune it when it is dormant, anytime in the fall or winter after the leaves have fallen off. When you prune them back, get them bearing, they will produce real good apples for cider and probably for cooking, as well.

Early autumn wild leeks with buds. Later they have white flowers, then go to seed.



Using his wagon spring digging tool, Floyd Woodbeck unearths a wild leek.



A wilk leek with its small, white "onion."

If you want to have the old apples, you graft them onto your own trees. Grafting is the only way you get any new apples. Every MacIntosh is a grafted apple; you can't raise them from seed. If you take the seed out of a MacIntosh apple and plant it, you come up with mostly trees that bear little wild apples. Only once in every 1,000 or 10,000 times will a tree have superior fruit on it. When they find a tree with superior fruit, they take that tree and graft from it. Delicious apples I think were found down on a Virginia farm growing wild. The Stark brothers bought it, insured it for $25,000, put a big high fence around it, and started cutting grafts off it. All Delicious apples came off of one tree.

Have you got or can you get some glass topped quart canning jars? I use them to make sauerkraut, in as the salt will eat through metal tops. I use one thinly sliced red onion to two heads of cabbage. Pack the shredded cabbage into a jar, tamping it down until the juice that forms covers the cabbage. When the jar is filled add two level teaspoons of salt, wet the rubber jar ring, put it on the jar and clamp down the cover. You do not have to do any more. Store in a cool place, and in six weeks it's ready to use. The onion doesn't give it the sour taste; it would get sour without the onion, but it gives it a more snappy taste.

You can still dig wild leeks in the fall. A lot of people just call them wild onions, because they're used the same way as onions, but they're really stronger. They grow in shady spots in the woods, where the ground is moist. In the spring and early summer they have wide leaves. In late August there are no leaves left on the plant; just the stems and the buds. In September they have white flowers, then they go to seed. But you can dig them up right until the first frost, and as early in the spring as the ground thaws, though in the spring they won't be as large.

These are a few things you can do in the fall. That's all for now, as I never liked teachers who gave too much homework.

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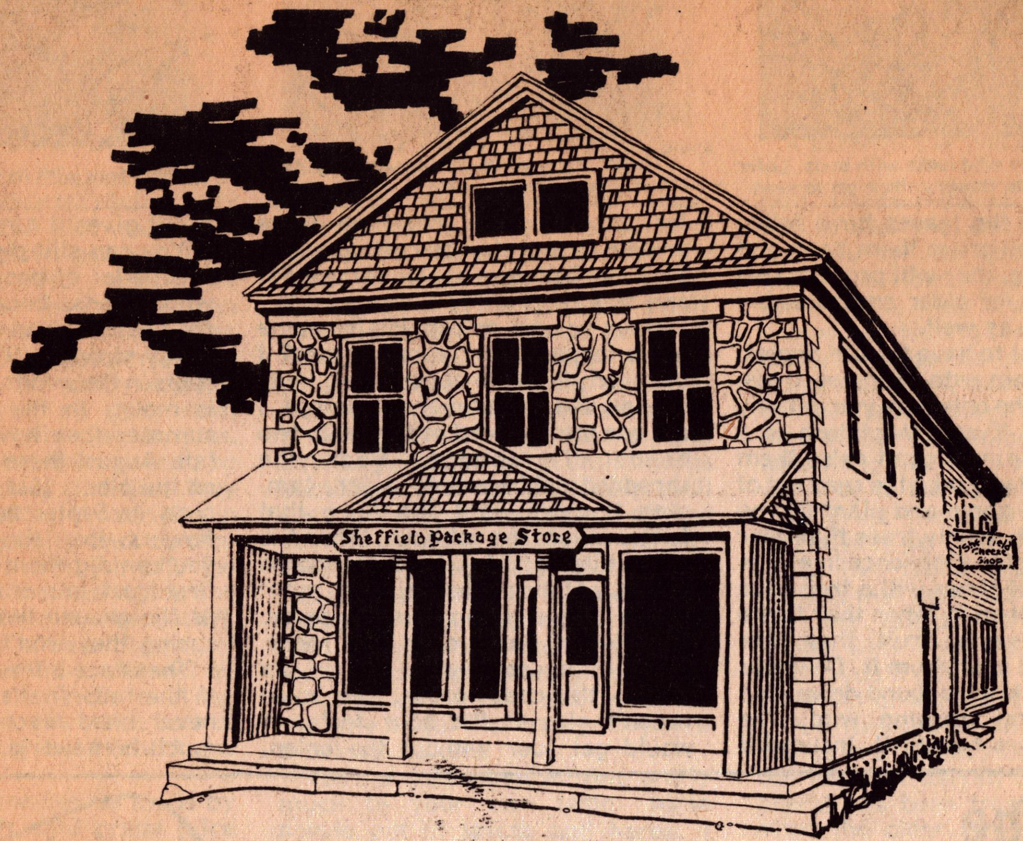

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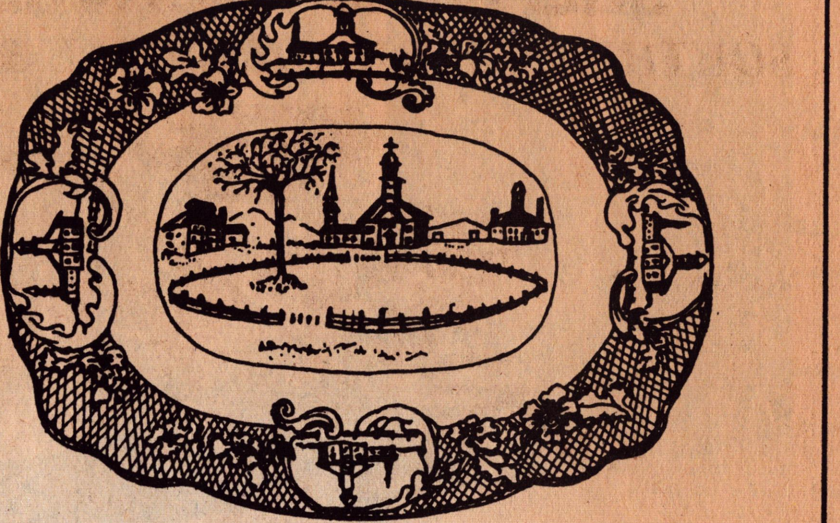
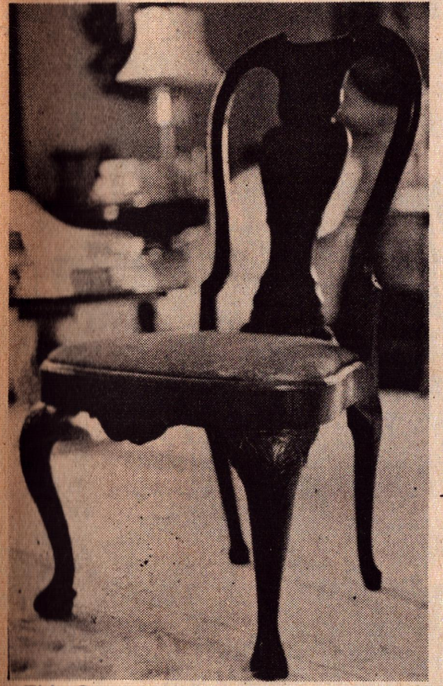


Antique Shopper's Guide to Styles

You can walk through a dozen antique stores in the Berkshires - or anywhere - and never see a genuine early American antique. But even if you never see a genuine piece, it's a good idea to know what the styles are if you're going to be frequenting antique stores. Most of these styles have been reproduced — sometimes very faithfully — and in some cases, such as 19th century reproductions of earlier styles, they are worthy additions to any home. And, who knows, you might get lucky, wander into a shop and find a prized early American piece that would look perfect in your living room. Therefore, on these pages, **Berkshire Magazine** outlines the basic early American furniture styles from the 18th and 19th centuries.



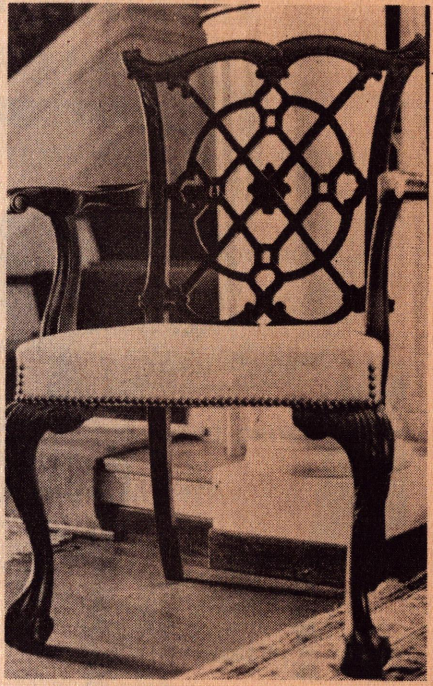
This Queen Anne side chair is one of a pair to be found in the Chesterwood living room. It was made in 1735 and shows the characteristic Queen Anne cabriole legs and vase-shaped central splat.

Queen Anne 1725 - 1755

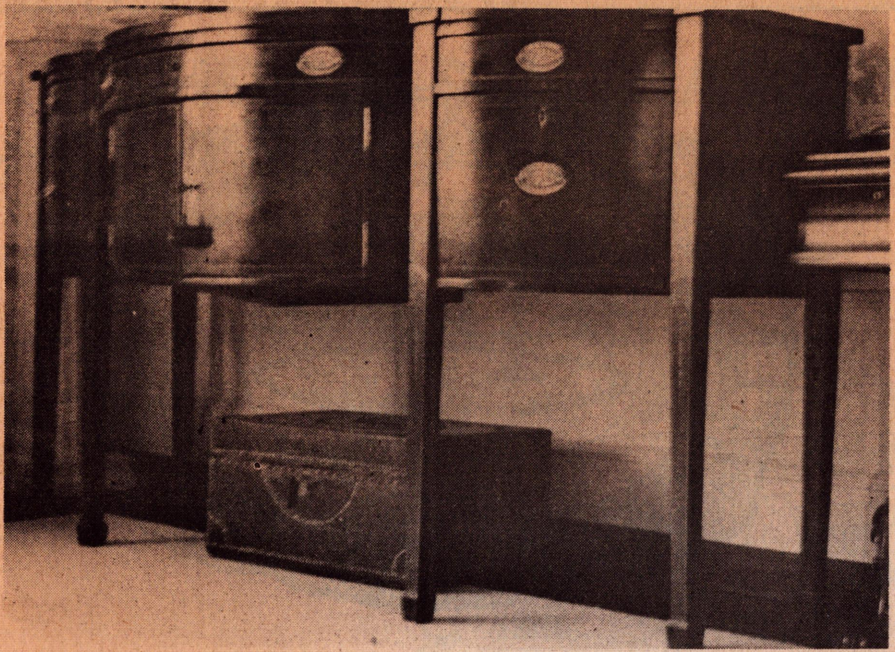
Queen Anne ruled in England from 1702 - 1714, but it was some time before the furniture style that developed during her reign was imported to America. The major impact of this style was a change from the previous rigid, stiff furniture to a type that was lighter, more graceful and more comfortable. The backs and legs of pieces in this style are slightly curved to form a slender S shaped design called the cyma curve. A leg in the shape of the cyma curve, called a cabriole leg, coupled with a pad or three-toed trifid foot, is perhaps the most characteristic mark of any Queen Anne antique. The French version of the cabriole leg is called pied de biche - doe's foot. The most fashionable wood at the time was walnut, but fine pieces were also made of cherry, maple, butternut and mahogany.

The typical Queen Anne chair has a solid splay in the middle of the back, a yoke-shaped crest and cabriole legs. The back is curved into a spoon shape, another variation of the cyma curve. There might be a scroll on the back or arms, as this was a favorite decoration, and a shell or spiral might be carved into the back or legs.

To illustrate its antiques guide, **Berkshire Magazine** went to Chesterwood, home of sculptor Daniel Chester French. Located off Route 183 in Stockbridge, it is now open to the public from May through October as a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States. French purchased this house in 1896 as a summer home and built a 30-foot high studio shortly thereafter. He spent his summers at Chesterwood until his death in 1931, and it was here where he worked on many of his most famous works, including the Seated Lincoln which is in the Lincoln Monument in Washington, D.C. All photographs permitted courtesy of Chesterwood and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.



A Chippendale chair that shows some Chinese influence adorns the Chesterwood front hall. Note the pierced back, the top rail with "ears" and the claw and ball feet. This piece was purchased by French in 1907.



A sideboard, circa 1800, that French bought in 1909. It is thought to be a Hepplewhite piece. It has the square, tapering legs of that style, but the ends are convex and this is a characteristic of the later Sheraton style.

A new item of furniture to appear at this time - during the 1730's - was the tea table which catered to the new fad of drinking the exotic Oriental beverage. They, too, have cabriole legs and are generally round. In New England, though, they were also made with rectangular tops.

Chippendale 1755 - 1790

This style is named after famous London designer Thomas Chippendale (1718 - 1770) who is credited with being the first person ever to publish a book devoted solely to furniture design. **The Gentleman and Cabinetmaker's Director** appeared in 1754 and immediately set the tone for fashionable styles. This style evolved out of the Queen Anne era, and, in many cases, a Chippendale piece is merely an elaboration of the Queen Anne style. Cabriole legs were used, but the claw and ball foot replaced the pad foot, though sometimes a paw or scroll foot was used instead. There are also some Chippendale chairs which have straight legs. Walnut, mahogany and cherry were the favored woods.

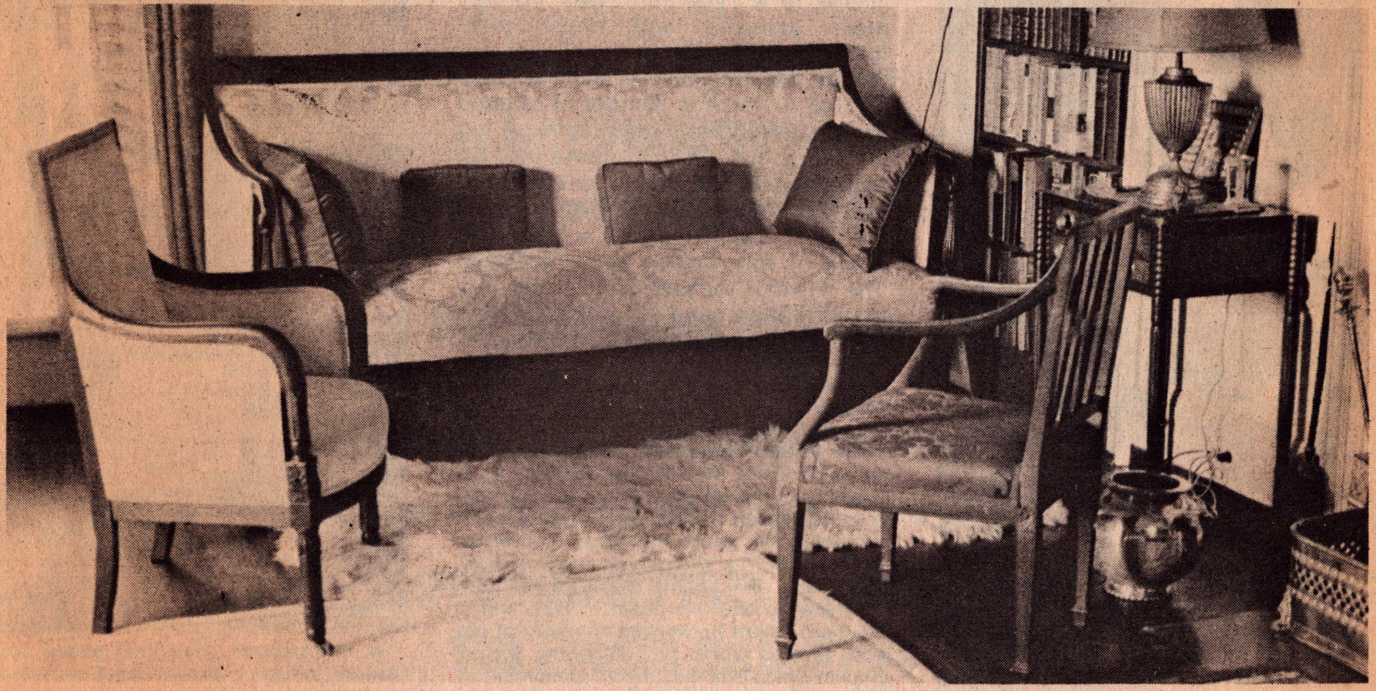
Besides the claw and ball foot, the primary characteristsc of Chippendale furniture are elaborate carving on legs and backs, pierced center splats on backs of chairs, and top chair rails that are either turned down on the ends to meet the stiles of the back or else turned up to form ears.

Chippendale chairs are generally larger than Queen Anne chairs, mostly because their seats are a little more generous. The ladder back chair, with slats running horizontally instead of vertically, is also a Chippendale creation.

Furniture made in Massachusetts during this period had particularly slender lines, and later, after other regions had abandoned stretchers across the bottoms of chair legs, chairs in New England retained them to support their frail posture.

Hepplewhite 1790 - 1815

This style is named after another London designer, George Hepplewhite. Hepplewhite, himself, is an unknown figure; no details of his life have been uncovered and no single piece of furniture known to have been made by him exists. The style is based entirely on the designs in his book, **Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Guide,** published by his wife in 1788, two years after his death. Hepplewhite pieces are characterized by slender, tapered legs, exotic inlays and smaller, more delicate proportions than Chippendale pieces. A Chippendale



The Sheraton corner of Chesterwood's living room. The eight leg Sheraton sofa and Sheraton open arm chair and the small Sheraton work table were all made about 1800. The Sheraton upholstered armchair was made about 1815.

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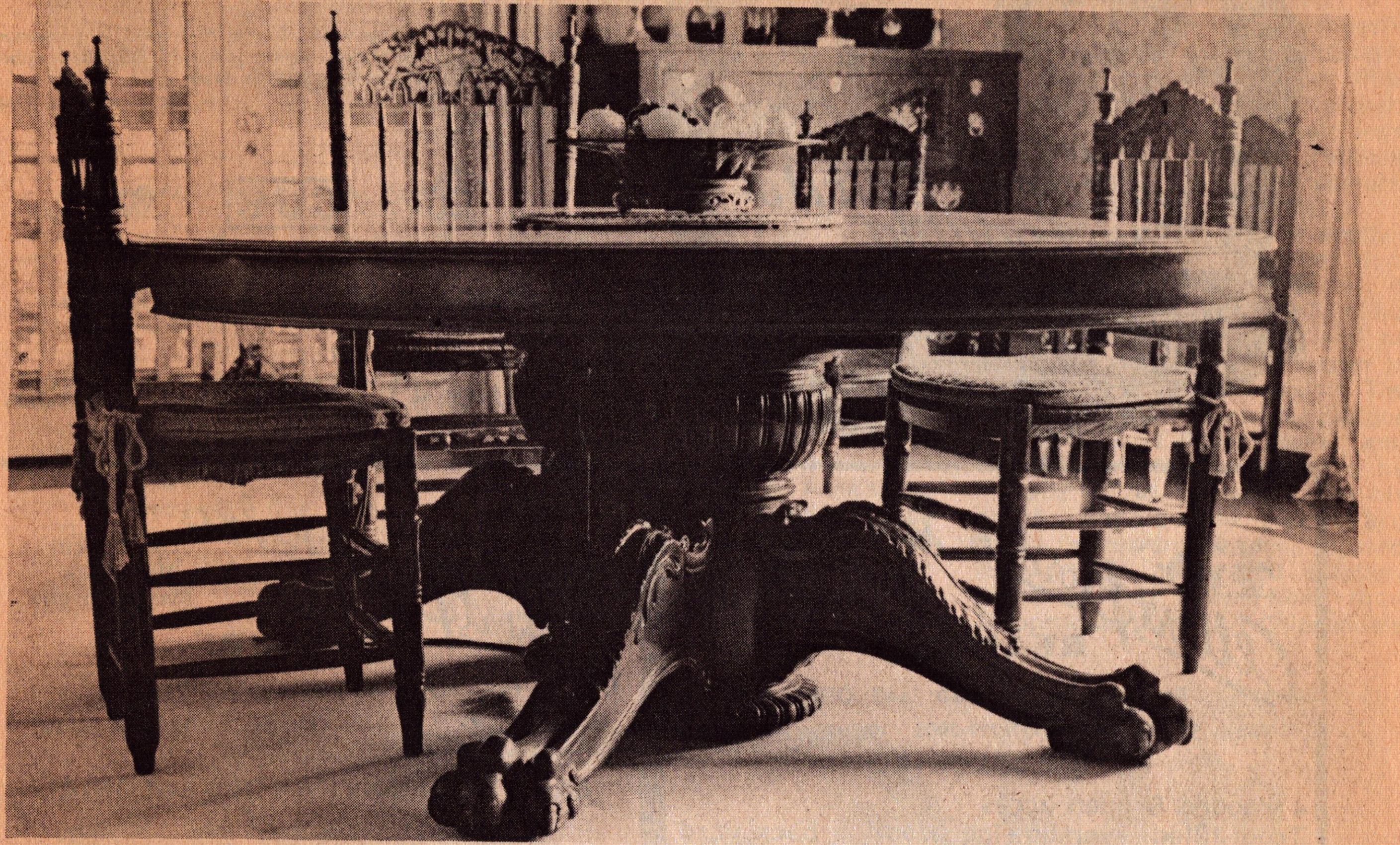
is heavy, with carving but little inlay; a Hepplewhite is lighter, with little carving but generous inlay.

Perhaps the most common Hepplewhite piece is the shield back chair. Backs of these chairs are in the shape of shields, hearts and occasionally ovals, and they often have urn, floral, drapery and feather motifs designed into the backs.

The sideboard was introduced during this period. Hepplewhite sideboards have square or concave ends, a recessed center and square, tapered legs. Later Sheraton sideboards have convex or kidney shaped ends with turned, reeded legs.



The Chesterwood dining room boasts a mahogany Empire pedestal table made about 1830 and chairs made to order in Spain in 1923. In the far corner is an Empire chest, circa 1835. French bought this chest down the road in Housatonic for eight dollars in 1898. When he brought it home his wife said "you're not going to bring that thing into the house!" After French refinished it and replaced the original wooden knobs with brass fixtures, it made a fine addition to the dining room.

Sheraton 1795 - 1815

Thomas Sheraton also published a book which influenced the course of furniture making. It was the **Cabinet-maker and Upholster's Drawing Book**, published in the early 1790's. His style, copied by many in England and later in America, is known by its turned or square tapering reeded legs and the square backs of chairs and sofas. The pieces are normally designed with straight lines, rather than curved lines, but are of about the same delicate proportions as Hepplewhite. The rectangular backs of chairs always have a cross bar just above the seat, which gives them stability. The top rails of these chairs are usually straight, but when the centers are raised, they are a continuation of two central, vertical splats. Sometimes these chairs have a central splat, but more often they have a number of narrow banisters running vertically from the seat to the top rail.

A different type of Sheraton chair is influenced by classical Greek styles. It has a wide, horizontal top rail with one or more horizontal splats below it. The Martha Washington chair is also a famous Sheraton design, although it was made in other styles as well. It has an upholstered back and seat with tapered legs and open, wooden arms.

The Sheraton Constitution mirror is another landmark of this period. It has a row of balls under the top, or cornice, and the glass is divided into two sections, with the upper panel adorned with a painting, often of the USS Constitution. A variation of this mirror was carried over into the later Empire style, but with much heavier, more massive proportions.

Empire 1810 - 1840

Deriving its name from Napoleon's empire, this style reflects America's close post-revolutionary ties with France, but of course, by the time the style was popular in the United States, Napoleon himself had already been defeated and exiled. Antiques of this vintage are heavier in line and coarser in detail than Sheraton pieces, and they are characterized by heavy scrolls and curves and ornate carvings in naturalistic designs.

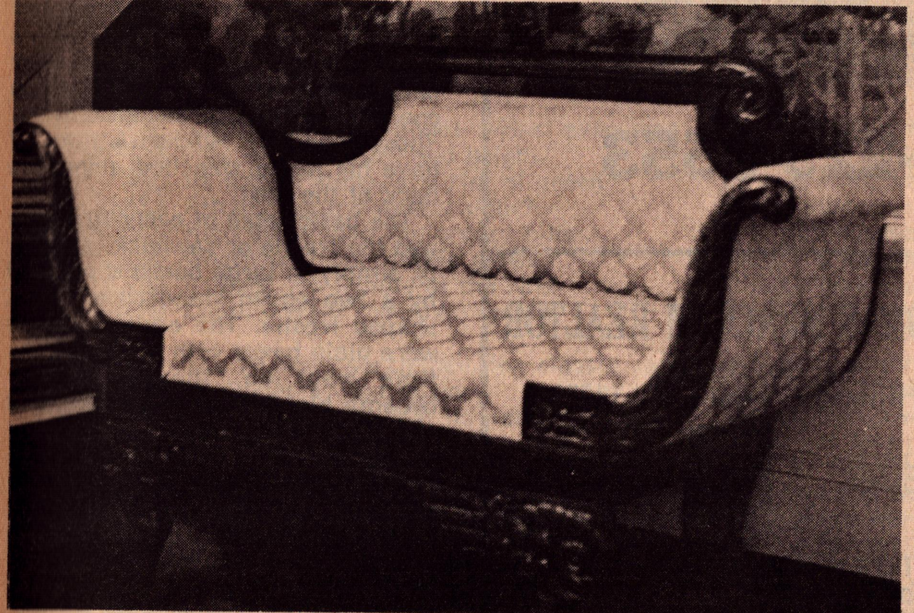
The Empire period, as the Sheraton period, was greatly influenced by the Greek revival in architecture and other arts taking place in America in the early 19th century. Grecian columns are common as table supports and on the sides of chests.

The Empire chair has a wide, fiddle-shaped splat in back and side pieces which often extend in a curve to the seat. Chair legs are curved, though not like the delicate Queen Anne cabriole leg, and the feet are normally in the shape of a lion's paw. As the Empire period progressed in time, the pieces became more and more massive, and this is a tell-tale sign for dating a piece within the period.

Victorian 1840 - 1900

The Victorian period, roughly corresponding to the reign of Queen Victoria, is an eclectic style that really displays few, if any original designs of its own. Rather, Victorian craftsmen selected designs and styles from previous eras and blended them into often fantastic combinations. Mahogany, rosewood and black walnut are the favorite Victorian woods, but wood itself became less important in the construction of furniture. Cast iron was used, marble was used and, for the first time, furniture covered entirely with upholstery was introduced. One change that occurred because of a technological advance was the increased use of veneers. The invention of the circular saw allowed thinner and larger pieces of veneer to be cut and made it possible to cover an entire table top with a thin piece of expensive wood laid over the body made of a less favored wood.

Because the Victorian period covers so much time and involves so many variations of styles, it is usually broken down into more manageable stylistic periods. The Victorian Gothic, popular from the 1830's to the 1870's, was small and light, unlike the heavy, rigid furniture of the middle ages which it professed to imitate. But Gothic decorations like the pointed arch and rose window tracery were used in chairs and other pieces. Though a pleasant, airy style that enjoyed a long period of popularity, the Gothic influence was never as widespread in furniture as it was in architecture, when the peaked-roof houses with gingerbread embellishments were being built all over the country and especially in New England.



An Empire love seat made about 1835. It is made of mahogany and has gold damask upholstery. Note the Greek influence in the scrolled arms and carved legs.

The Victorian Roccoco, in vogue during the 1840's and 1850's, is sometimes referred to as the French style, and its name is derived from the French words for rock and shell. This style, whose most famous American proponent was John Henry Belter of New York, is the excessively decorated, flamboyant work so typical of the era. Exaggerated scrolls, curved legs, lacy borders and boldly carved motifs in fruit, flowers and animals are characteristic of the rococo Victorian decoration.

The Victorian Renaissance was the foremost style of the 1850's and 1860's. In part a reaction to the rococo style, pieces in this style are devoid of all the superfluous ornament of the previous period. This is a massive, imposing design that can sometimes be very grim. Marble was used extensively during this time and stark decoration ran to the use of the crest and heavy, sculptured busts.

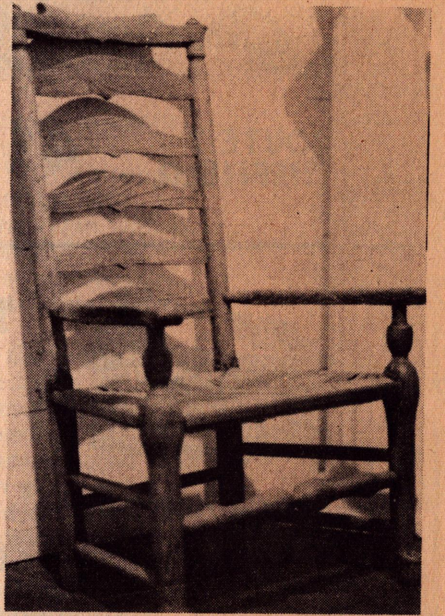
The Victorian Jacobean style was popular in the 1870's and later. It is characterized by the use of ornamental moldings and turned spindles used as railings on shelves and table edges.

Country Furniture

To talk about the various early American styles that were in fashion at various times is all well and good. However, though they are the styles most imitated by others and the ones most revered by collectors, few, if any were ever made in rural areas like the Berkshires. To be sure, some of the stylish people who have been coming to the Berkshires for the last hundred years have imported such furniture from New York, Boston and even England, but the furniture made in the Berkshires was more functional, more utilitarian.

Country furniture, sometimes termed kitchen furniture, was made for heavy use, and people were not impressed by ornamentation. Simple chairs, tables, stools, chests and cupboards were about the only pieces to be found in an early American home outside the big cities. But again, country furniture that is currently found in local antique stores is rarely more than 100 years old. This style, begun as early as the 17th century in coastal areas of New England, was made at home right up to about 1900 in the country, and much of the country furniture found today was made after the Civil War.

There are two basic types of chairs that were made and used in the 18th and 19th centuries: the slat back and the windsor. Slat back chairs are usually of the ladder back type, with several horizontal slats on a high back and a splint or rush seat. They have turned legs, posts and stretchers and the slats are often turned up on the upper edge. Later, these chairs became more simple, with little or no carving.



An early America ladder back chair is one of a pair to be found in the Chesterwood barn, which was remodelled into an exhibition gallery in 1962.

The essential character of the windsor chair is its stick construction. The outer sides of the back are stuck to the seat, rather than continuing to be legs. Made as early as the late 1700's, these chairs have seats of pine while the legs are usually made of maple, chestnut, birch or ash. They were almost always painted - green was the most

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common color, but red, yellow and white were also used. There are many different types of windsor chairs; the type most often made in New England was the loop back, shaped like a balloon and often with a single piece of wood continuing from the sides of the back down to the arms. One interesting variation of the windsor is the famous Boston rocker. Ben Franklin is credited with the idea of putting rockers on a chair; this may be nothing more than a legend, but the rocking chair is almost certainly an American invention. The Boston rocker has a vertical slat back, slouchy lines, comfortable curves and a saddle seat.

The country slat back chair was the inspiration for the first mass-produced chair in America, the Hitchcock chair. First made by Lambert Hitchcock in Hitchcocksville, Connecticut during the 1820's, it became one of the most popular chairs during the 19th century, and it is still reproduced today. It is a small, light chair with a rush or wicker seat and is usually painted with a stenciled design on one of the horizontal back slats. Those made by Hitchcock himself have his name stenciled along the back of the seat.

The basic table of early America was the trestle or sawbuck table. It is, simply, a large board supported by a two-legged standard or an X shaped trestle. The earliest chests were plain boxes with a flat lid. As time went on, they gradually became higher and narrower, and eventually the blanket chest was developed with drawers added on the bottom. These in turn were replaced by the real chest of drawers - the lowboy and highboy. A lowboy has a frame mounted on legs with one to three drawers. A highboy is essentially a lowboy with a chest of drawers mounted on top. Lowboys and highboys were also made in styles that were imported into this country from Europe. Almost all country furniture is made of local wood. In this area maple and pine were most common.

Shaker furniture is a regional style of country furniture made by the Shakers who settled in New England and New York. This type is extremely simple and functional, clean-lined, devoid of ornament and soundly built. Shaker chairs have plain slat backs and are occasionally painted red or blue. They were made with and without arms and rockers. The seats are normally made of splint or rush. Again, though attractive to the modern taste, Shaker furniture is hard to find, and most people make do with reproductions.

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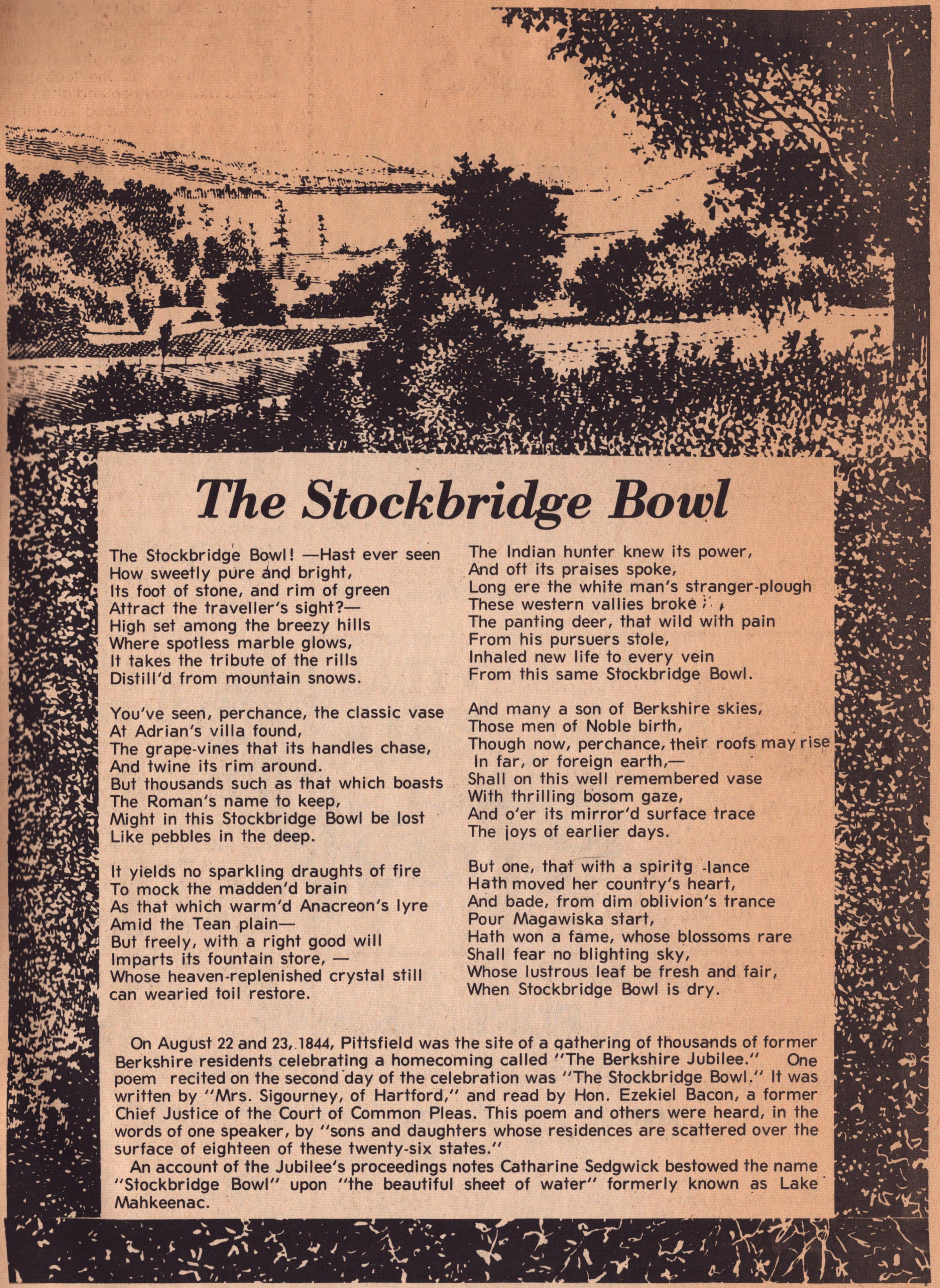

The Stockbridge Bowl

The Stockbridge Bowl! —Hast ever seen
How sweetly pure and bright,
Its foot of stone, and rim of green
Attract the traveller's sight?—
High set among the breezy hills
Where spotless marble glows,
It takes the tribute of the rills
Distill'd from mountain snows.

You've seen, perchance, the classic vase
At Adrian's villa found,
The grape-vines that its handles chase,
And twine its rim around.
But thousands such as that which boasts
The Roman's name to keep,
Might in this Stockbridge Bowl be lost
Like pebbles in the deep.

It yields no sparkling draughts of fire
To mock the madden'd brain
As that which warm'd Anacreon's lyre
Amid the Tean plain—
But freely, with a right good will
Imparts its fountain store, —
Whose heaven-replenished crystal still
can wearied toil restore.

The Indian hunter knew its power,
And oft its praises spoke,
Long ere the white man's stranger-plough
These western vallies broke ;
The panting deer, that wild with pain
From his pursuers stole,
Inhaled new life to every vein
From this same Stockbridge Bowl.

And many a son of Berkshire skies,
Those men of Noble birth,
Though now, perchance, their roofs may rise
In far, or foreign earth,—
Shall on this well remembered vase
With thrilling bosom gaze,
And o'er its mirror'd surface trace
The joys of earlier days.

But one, that with a spiritg -lance
Hath moved her country's heart,
And bade, from dim oblivion's trance
Pour Magawiska start,
Hath won a fame, whose blossoms rare
Shall fear no blighting sky,
Whose lustrous leaf be fresh and fair,
When Stockbridge Bowl is dry.

On August 22 and 23, 1844, Pittsfield was the site of a gathering of thousands of former Berkshire residents celebrating a homecoming called "The Berkshire Jubilee." One poem recited on the second day of the celebration was "The Stockbridge Bowl." It was written by "Mrs. Sigourney, of Hartford," and read by Hon. Ezekiel Bacon, a former Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. This poem and others were heard, in the words of one speaker, by "sons and daughters whose residences are scattered over the surface of eighteen of these twenty-six states."

An account of the Jubilee's proceedings notes Catharine Sedgwick bestowed the name "Stockbridge Bowl" upon "the beautiful sheet of water" formerly known as Lake Mahkeenac.

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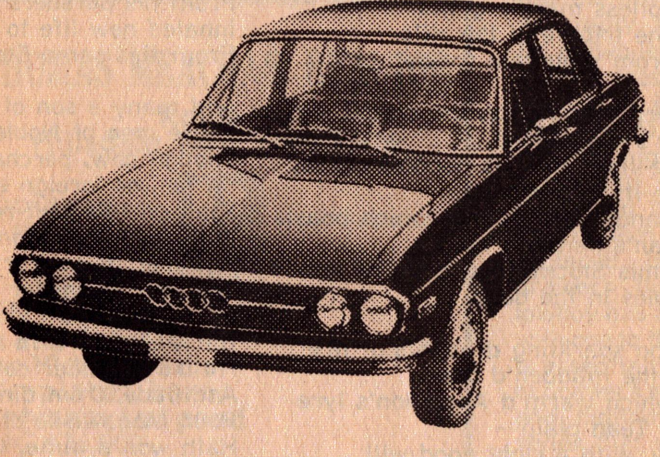

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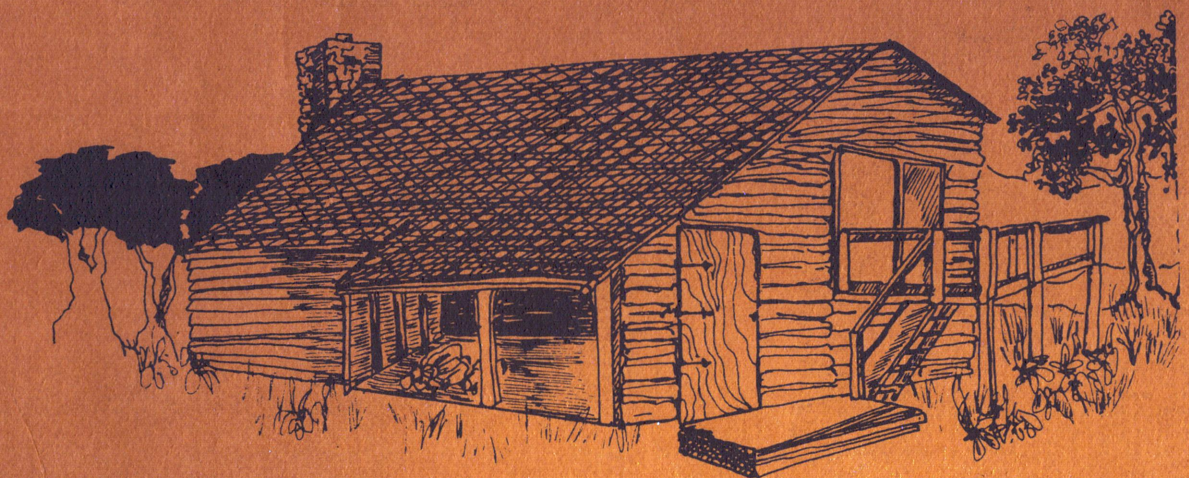

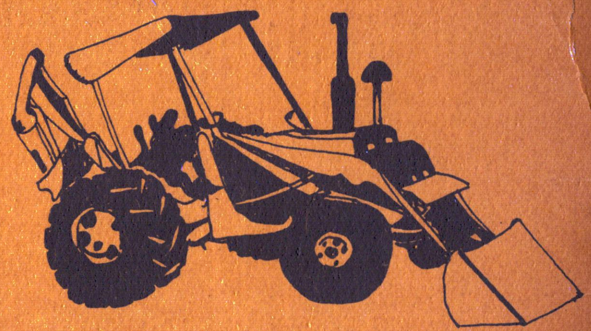

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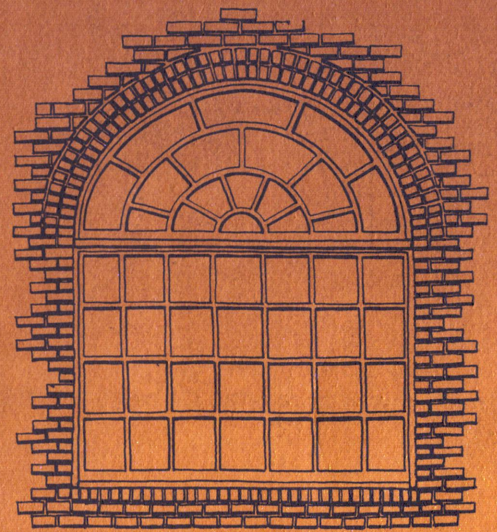

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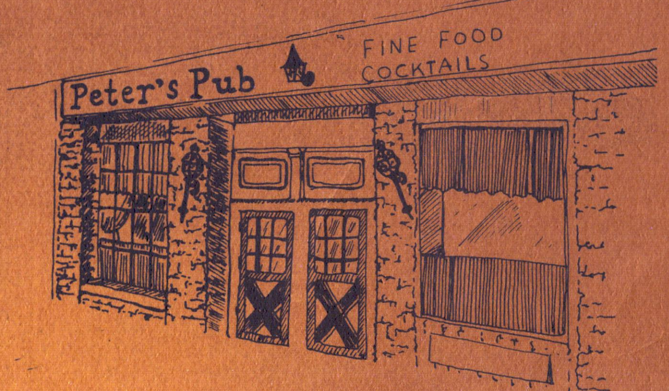

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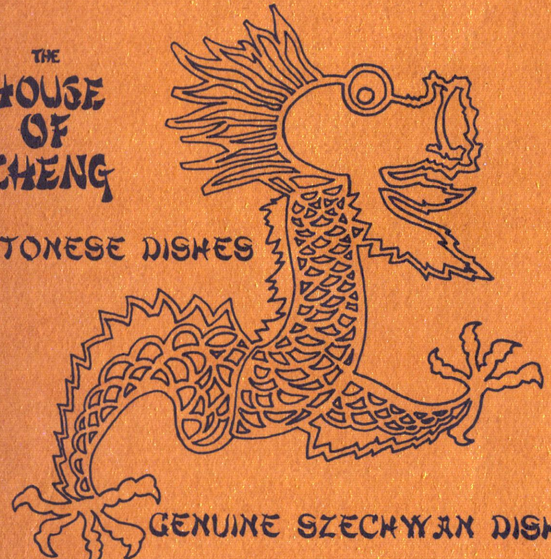

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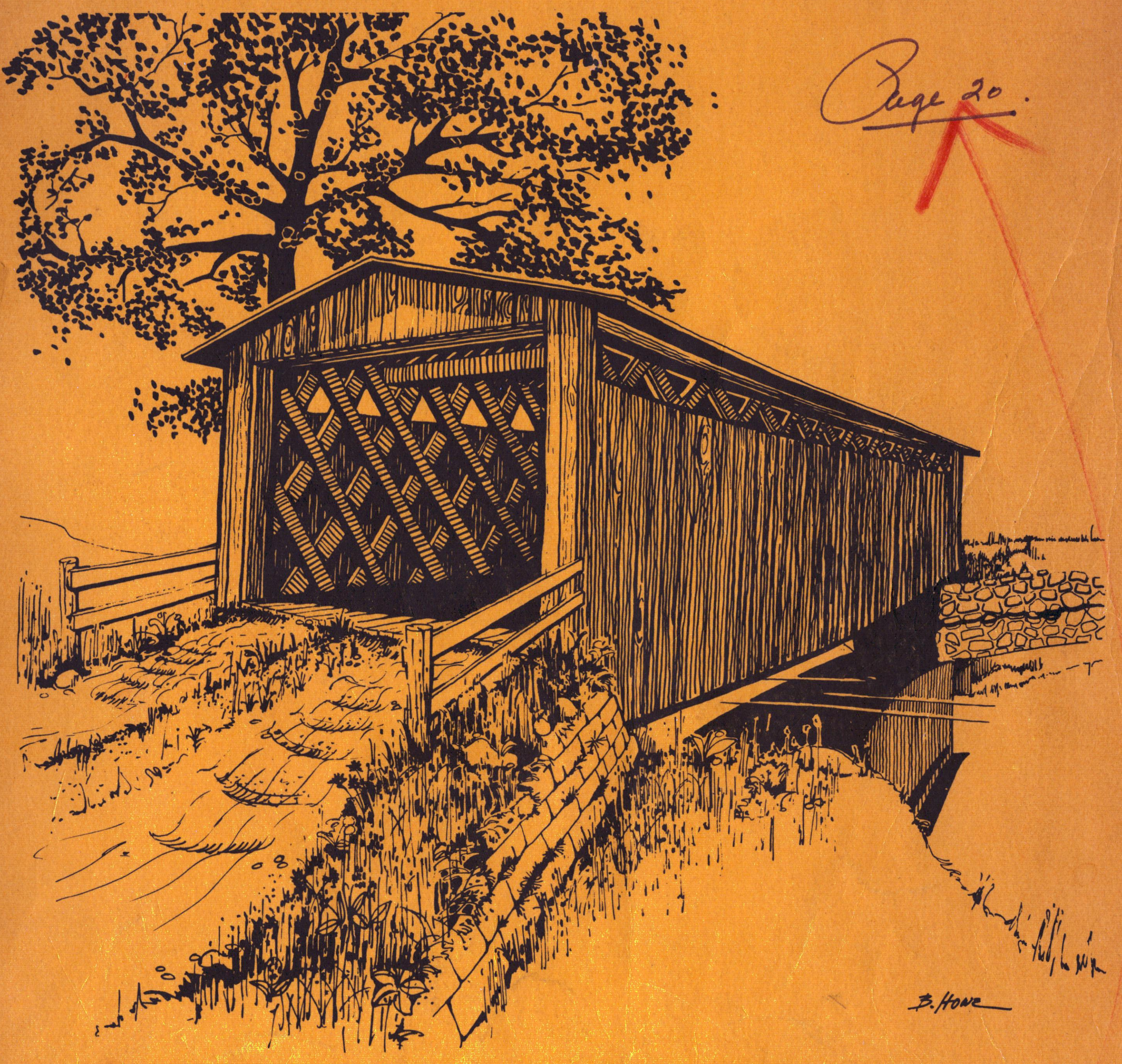

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Legends of the Berkshires